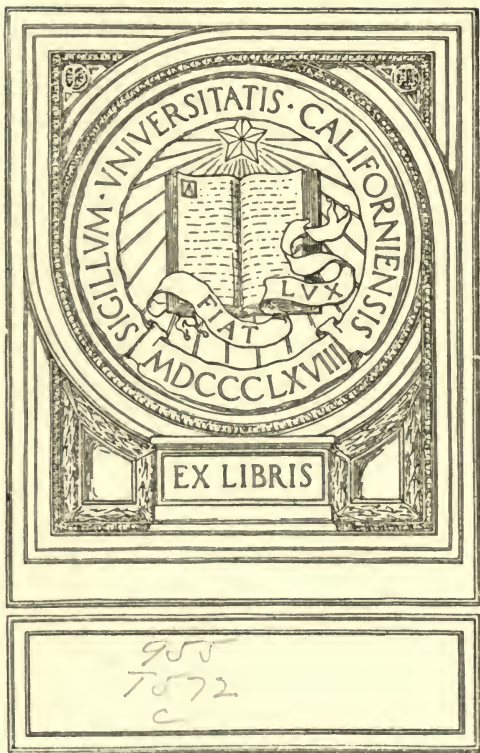


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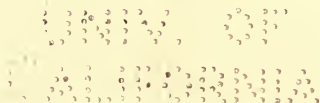
CHIQUITA

AN AMERICAN NOVEL

The Romance of a Ute Chief's Daughter

BY

MERRILL TILESTON



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CHIQUITA.

CHAPTER I.

A BOZRAH BORNIN'.

A tallow candle shed its sickly and flickering light in the front room of an ancient farm house, as Jack Sheppard announced his arrival on earth at four o'clock on a Friday morning. He arrived in a snow-storm, and it was a very select gathering of some of old Bozrah's prominent citizens who greeted his entry into the world. There was old Doctor Pettingill, with square-rimmed, blue-glass spectacles; Grandma Paisley, who didn't care for avoirdupois, just so it was a boy; Aunt Diantha, with portentous air and red mittens, while in the kitchen, dozing by the big fireplace, was Uncle Zebedee, who had driven over from Pudden Hollow the evening before to learn the news and "set up" all night in order to be of assistance in case of necessity.

The whole Deerfield valley was interested, and it made no difference if the snow did play tag up and down the necks and on the faces of all Bozrah as

they brought paregoric, feather pillows, goody-goodies and all the useful uselessnesses that each and every one had kept for years and years awaiting a possible occasion. There was an old brass warming-pan that Deacon Baxter used to warm the bed for Governor Winthrop, and a hot water jug which Great-grandma Lathrop averred warmed the feet of every one of her seventeen "darters and grand-darters." There was also a quilt made of silk patches, each patch taken from a dress that some colonial dame had worn when she danced the stately minuet at a great function in Boston or Albany.

All these good people had a successful way of bringing up children in the paths of self-reliance, respect, thrift, endurance and honesty which made stalwart, orthodox patriots.

The Sheppards were an old English family who settled in New England late in the seventeenth century—three brothers, one of which, according to ye olden tyme records, planted the elm trees in front of the meetyngelhouse on Dorchester hill; these trees, at the age of sixty or seventy years, being cut down by the British during the Revolutionary War. The descendants of the three brothers were thrifty men, large of physique and of great executive ability, the women the loveliest of the colonies—families of sterling integrity, wealth and esteem.

"Thad" Sheppard, Jack's father, was in some respects an exception, he being a man of the world, of the wild, dangerous class, handsome and talented, but lacking the balance wheel which magnetic temperaments usually require. He was admired by both men and women to the point of the danger line, for his schemes wrecked many a fortune and family, ultimately losing him the confidence of all. "Thad" loved one of the beautiful daughters of the Deerfield valley, and, despite the protestations of friends and relatives, she married him, claiming she could do what none thus far had been able to accomplish—reform him. "Thad's" habits had not been curbed. Life was too gay for thoughts of the sombre hereafter, and the sedate, sober counsel of the old men was scorned, but their predictions were to be most cruelly fulfilled. Yet there was that confiding love, that desire to accomplish miracles, which swayed the fair young girl of the Deerfield hills to sacrifice herself in the hope of reform. Oh, what a waste of time for any woman! What debauchery of intellect, what a prostitution of a fair and beautiful life; utter folly, deliberate social suicide, with its months and years of anguish and debasement for the mere gratification of an impulse! To be sure, there are some moments, comprising even days or months, when happiness reigns, but do these few hours, which grow farther apart, shorter and

shorter, as time wears away, compensate for the millions of silent, expectant moments during which the uncomplaining wife watches for that unerring expression which never deceives her? Is there any excuse a mother can give her daughter, budding into womanhood, for bringing her into the world to face disgrace, possibly crime? Does a son, born of such parents, have that respect and confidence toward father and mother that he should?

Sue Paisley lived on that beautiful farm where Jack was born. She was on a visit while "Thad" attended important business in the great cotton markets of the South. She loved the brook that gurgled and splashed along its course. Nodding bluebells coquetted with the tiny wave crests, while the grass along the bank waved little blades in defiance at the roar of its voice. Each summer Sue sang its praises to the tinkle of the whetstone as the farm hand sharpened his scythe, tink, tink, tinkety tink. When she married, she left the long rows of maple trees, the great red barn, the stuffy parlor, the spare room with its high feather bed and Dutch clock; the big round dining table with tilting top, blue and white chinaware, and the long well sweep, to become hostess in the more pretentious surroundings of a small city on the Connecticut, living long enough to realize how futile were her efforts to stay the temptations which beset "Thad" on every hand.

Misfortune overtook all his financial investments, and, as one enterprise followed another in the maelstrom of speculation, Sue's life ebbed away, leaving Jack and his sisters to be cared for by a spinster aunt, who undertook the responsibility at the earnest solicitation of "Thad."

The awakening from sin was that of genuine remorse and sorrow. With the characteristic determination of those rugged ancestors, "Thad" broke off all his former boon companionships, started on entirely new lines of life and succeeded in living down the awful past. In a few years he remarried, giving Jack a mother who learned to love her stepson as her own. Jack was not the ever industrious boy in school, but he was quick to learn both kinds of knowledge, useful and mischievous. That is the reason why the old red school-house, at the top of the hill, held pleasant recollections for him in after life. Of course, "J-A-C-K" was carved into the top of every desk at which he sat and, as the first row of desks was the "baby" or A, B, C row, the next one a little larger, and so on, the four rows of "boxes" represented four classes, and Jack managed to stay in each class long enough to carve his name where future generations would find it.

"He's the most trying pupil in the school," was what the teacher told everybody in the little village.

When the snow was deep, Jack took his dinner in a little basket, just the same as the other scholars, and at the noon recess he was always in the games in which the girls liked to have a few of the nice boys to help out. Two chairs, facing each other, with a little gap between them, then a ring of boys and girls holding hands to circle around between the chairs, while a boy and a girl stood on the chairs, hands clasped across the gap, all joining in singing the little couplet :

“ The needle’s eye that does supply
The thread that runs so true,
I’ve caught many a smiling lass,
And now I have caught you.”

It was the boy’s turn to choose the girl he wanted for a partner, and she had to submit to the penalty of a kiss before she could mount the chair. The desks were arranged in horseshoe form, and of course the favorite seats were in the back row, farthest away from the teacher, but Jack generally managed to be on a line with the first nail hole in the horseshoe by the time the first third of the term was reached. This, so the teacher could better keep her eye on him.

It was near the end of the summer term that a little event occurred which made a lasting impression on Jack. His seat-mate was an ungainly little urchin who had the faculty of being cunning without being smart. His name was “ Ted ” Smith, but he was better known

as "Ted Weaver," for he had a habit of rocking to and fro from one hand to another while he studied. Jack happened to be busy with lessons when some one shot a paper wad at one of the scholars, which missed the scholar but hit the teacher on the cheek.

Miss Freeman was spare and angular, with a pointed rose-colored nose, hard, cold-gray eyes, and long neck circled with a severe white linen collar, which lay flat over the prominent collar bones. The black waist of her dress was severely plain, with, seemingly, a gross of buttons made of wooden molds covered with the dress fabric. The skirt covered an area of floor space that was in keeping with the period before the Civil War, when hoop skirts ruled the fashion, and, as the "tilter" tilted, it could be seen the school ma'am enumerated among her personal belongings a pair of white hose and cloth gaiters. A head of luxurious hair was parted exactly in the middle and divided into three portions, two side and back strands, the side strands twisted to the temples, then the smooth flat surface gracefully looped over the tops of the ears until the curve of the hair reached the eyebrows; the ends of the strands were then formed into a foundation, around which the back hair was wound, after a sufficient quantity had been properly separated for curls—long ones for the side, or short ones to dangle idly behind.

When the paper wad struck Miss Freeman a rap immediately brought the school to order. With a searching gaze she tried to locate the evil doer, and her well-trained eye rested on Jack, who innocently looked up to see the cause of the unusual summons "to order." Jack knew who shot the wad, for he had noticed the culprit shoot others earlier in the day, a performance which had escaped the teacher's notice and cheek.

"Jack, did you throw that paper wad?" she asked, her voice as cold and hard as that of the second mate of a three-masted brig.

"No, ma'am."

"Do you know who did throw it?"

Jack would not tell a lie about the wad, so he answered slowly, "Yes, ma'am."

"Who did it?"

There was no reply.

"Who threw the wad?"

She had flushed to her hair at the commencement of the inquisition, but now the color slowly receded and the lines in her severe face became like those in stone.

"Unless you tell me who threw the wad I shall punish you."

Jack remained silent. His little bosom filled with wrath because the culprit would not speak up; but his honor was so strong that he would not be "telltale."

The teacher reached for her switch and told Jack to step forward. Like a little man he marched up to her desk and stood, not defiant, but humble and submissive, awaiting his punishment. Miss Freeman stepped down from the platform with switch in hand, and again demanded the name of the guilty one.

"I'll never tell," said Jack in a whisper.

There was a swish in the air and a sharp cracking noise as the rod smote Jack around the fleshy part of his legs.

"Will you tell now?" asked the teacher again.

Jack made no answer, but shook his head and stifled a sob. He knew if he relaxed his firmly shut teeth he would cry, so he gritted them and prepared to receive the following blows without flinching. Thoroughly maddened, the school ma'am finally threw off all endeavor of restraint and showered blow after blow upon poor Jack's arms, legs and bare feet, for it was summer and Jack followed the custom of other boys. But, it is needless to say, that was the last day he went barefooted. The switch was broken, but not the spirit in the boy. He had given way to tears, which gushed forth because of bodily pain. He sought to protect his feet and grabbed the infuriated school ma'am's skirt, and as the blows descended he swung under the protecting expanse of hoops. This piece of strategy perplexed the teacher, and as she had broken all her

switches she had to suspend hostilities until a new supply was gathered. Leaving Jack and the school room, she hastened to the willows, which grew in abundance just back of the building, and brought in a stick as big as a cane, just in time to see Jack disappearing through the window and his sturdy little legs, all striped with red marks, making tracks for home.

Episodes of this character followed Jack all through his school life. He had a stern father, who always punished his children if they were punished at school, no matter what the excuse, and on this occasion there was no exception, only in place of another "birching" the filial duty was limited to sending the boy to bed without anything to eat, so he could reflect upon the awful crime of disobedience to his teacher.

Nature has ever been prodigal in the distribution of her favors and disfavours, limiting her generosity in the picturesque to certain localities, and giving in abundance to the arid regions, as well as to the fertile valleys. But in her selfish allotments no upheavals in the vast chaos of creation furnished man an abiding place so compatible with his Puritanical doctrines as the forbidding rock-walled coast of New England and the everlasting hills extending back to the Hudson River, with their beautiful slopes, sinuous streams and forest-scented dales. And it was among these hills that Jack found, even in his younger days, that pleas-

ure and freedom which afterward was intensified by his associations with the forest-born red man.

Old Bozrah, where he first saw the light of day, was the Mecca to which his longing gaze was ever turned, even as he studied, worked or played, and no greater treat was in store for him than the one looked forward to when his father hitched up "Old Jerry" to drive that long twenty miles, through villages and past cross-road stores, to the old farm house. "Old Jerry" was known even better than "Thad" Sheppard. Every factory hand on Mill River from where it emptied into the Connecticut to the great reservoirs in the Goshen hills, and every farmer, merchant and preacher knew "Thad" and "Old Jerry."

"Thad" was well aware of the danger that lurked in the old reservoirs and knew the day would come when the torrent would burst forth and sweep all the industries away, and Jack wondered why everybody looked so grave and serious when the spring freshets made the brooks roily so he could not fish. In after years when that animated devastating fortress of trees, rocks and factory debris crushed its way down the valley, receiving its propulsive force from the waters which broke forth from bondage, Jack remembered those grave and serious faces.

But it was among the hills of the Deerfield valley that Jack loved best to wander and to fish for trout, or

to help Uncle Zebedee and Uncle John in planting or haying or "salting" the cattle, or gathering apples on hills so steep that the fruit rolled a rod sometimes after falling from the trees.

In the old barn at milking time, when the cows were yoked to their feed racks, Jack helped give them hay—nice new clover—and then waited and watched Aunt Sally strain the warm fluid into the bright pans, fearing the while she would forget the little cup, which he kept moving from one place to another, and which she seemed never to see until almost the last drop in the pail was reached. Churning day was always welcome to Jack. The old yellow churn, which stood near the big water trough in the wash room, had to be brought into the kitchen, and then he would turn the paddle wheel round and round, listening to the patter of the blades as they splashed into the cream, until finally he knew by the sound that the butter had "come."

Jack did not like Saturday night very well, for at sundown on the last day of the week those good orthodox folks commenced their Sunday. Saturday afternoon was given to baking cake and other dainties and getting the house in order for the Lord's Day. The men folks were shaved clean and all the chores were done and supper ended before sundown. Then the old black leather Bible was taken from the shelf and

all gathered around for family prayers. These devotions were held every night about bedtime, but Saturday evening was the beginning of the Sabbath, and services were held earlier and longer than on other days of the week. The room, with its chintz-covered lounge, rag carpet, Dutch clock, and chairs upholstered in haircloth, seemed more sacred on Saturday. The Bible was read, a lesson given from the shorter catechism, and several of Watts' hymns repeated by all together, or by volunteers, as the spirit moved; a song or two, then all would kneel devoutly, while Uncle John, in deep stentorian voice, prayed long and earnestly for the divine grace, which sustains the righteous through the snares and temptations of the wicked world; after which all retired.

On Sunday no work was done that could be avoided, and at an early hour in solemn procession all filed out to the vehicles which conveyed them to the village two and one-half miles away. The horses knew it was Sunday and devoutly raised one leg at a time in covering the distance. The minister knew it was Sunday and exhorted his hearers, with threats of dire hell and damnation, to mend their ways. Sunday school immediately after the morning service, then lunch at the wagons or on the steps of the church or in the church, and again the minister unrolled his sermons and renewed his valiant fight in

redemption of sinners. The choir stood up, the leader struck the key with his tuning fork, and when the "pitch" was duly recognized the last hymn was sung, followed by the doxology and benediction. All hearts seemed to begin life anew when the final "Amen" was pronounced, and although the long hill had to be ascended, it took less time than it had to descend in the morning. It was dinner time when the farm was again reached and all were hungry. After the meal the family gathered in the parlor, with its fragrant odor of musty walls, varnished maps and stuffy ancientness which pervaded everything. Here the conversation dwelt upon the goodness of the Lord, misfortunes of the sick in the neighborhood, news of which had been learned at church, or other topics not too worldly. As sundown approached the men folks commenced to get ready for the week's work and changed their clothes, while the women got out aprons and put away their "Sunday duds." By sunset the wash barrel was brought forth and the laundry work for Monday commenced.

In the wagon-shed Uncle John had his scythe ready to grind, and as Jack turned the stone he said to himself, "Uncle John bears down harder on Sunday night than he does any other night in the week."

These visits to the old farm were at frequent intervals, so Jack had ample opportunity to see real

country life under all the different aspects of maple-sugar making, planting, haying, cutting wood for the year, and building stone walls. Berrying was about the greatest enjoyment, next to catching brook trout, and such an abundance of blackberries in the pastures and woods where portions of the timber had been cut out! But the visits came to an end, inasmuch as Jack's father "moved west" to one of the great flour-milling cities, which flourished at the close of the Civil War.

In the west Jack received his final education, at sixteen taking leave of Latin, algebra and rhetoric, with one term in the high school. During the grammar school incubation Jack learned the difference between a village teacher and a city ward instructor; also that the western city ward boy had to fight occasionally, while the good New England lad was in mortal disgrace if he ever presumed to raise his hands against a fellow schoolmate. Jack had been warned time and again by his father not to fight, as it was wicked, and severe punishment awaited all demonstrations of anything in the nature of a "scrap."

It was but natural that a boy who would not fight should become the target for every pugnacious lad in the school, and Jack went home regularly with a bloody nose or scratched face, as a result of some misunderstanding. Not only would he get larruped by the bigger boys, but little fellows half his size walloped him

good and plenty. Then the teacher had to make an example of him with the ruler, and finally his father finished up the job in the barn or across his knee with the hair brush. The hair brush was the handiest thing Jack ever encountered in his "spare (not) the rod" career. One day he went home with a frightful cut in his lip where some "bully" of the school had kicked him. His father lost all patience and Jack pleaded for a hearing.

"Why do you tell me it is wicked to fight and punish me for getting licked? I can lick any boy in the school, but have never raised my hand yet, because you told me not to, and they pick on me all the time."

It was a revelation to the parent and he wondered at his own obtuseness. One instruction, one little lesson to be a man, he gave Jack: "Do not fight for the sake of showing off, or to be a 'bully,' but defend yourself always."

Jack was all excitement, and forgot his swollen lip. His father continued: "And when you find you have to defend yourself, strike straight from the shoulder and hit between the eyes, downward, like that," and the stern old man took a crack at the side of the barn and ripped a board off, besides nearly breaking his knuckle. Jack went to school that afternoon, and at recess, when a big, red-headed bully, nicknamed "Cross-eyed Whittaker," commenced to tease and

banter him, Jack edged away as usual, but with eyes ablaze and fist clinched. He saw that the "bully" was bent on showing off, and knew the time had come to make the first stand for Jack. Whittaker was about the same height, but much heavier in build than Jack. Finally, as the big one got nearer and nearer and became more and more offensive, Jack stood his ground, looking the "bully" over from head to foot, and suddenly said:

"You miserable coward, you have picked on me long enough. Now let me alone or take the licking that you deserve."

The other boys, of course, jumped up and gathered in a ring. "Fight! Fight!" was yelled by a hundred throats, as all rushed to where the now angry combatants faced each other. Jack stood poised on one foot ready for any emergency. All at once he spied the crony of the "bully" sneaking through the crowd of boys to get behind his chum. When the latter saw his "pal" his courage increased wonderfully, but ere he had time to put into execution the thoughts uppermost in his mind, Jack made a feint, a step back and then a lunge ahead with a right-hand smash just as he had seen his father hit the board, and the "bully" lay at his feet writhing and kicking in defeat.

Whittaker took the licking very much to heart, and he carried a scar on his lip, caused by Jack's blow, to

his grave. Jack heard occasionally that the "bully" had sworn to "get even," but as time passed and their pursuits carried them into opposing channels, Whitaker soon became a school-day reminiscence and later was not even remembered by name.

Jack's school days came to an end and he went into his father's mill to work, learning the various methods of flour manufacture and manner of marketing the product. The business did not seem to take his fancy. "Something wrong in the industry," he would often say to the boss miller. "Here you work this mill day and night, turn out three hundred barrels of flour every twenty-four hours, yet lose money on the product half the time. Six months of the year is a loss, but none of the mill owners can give the reason why."

"You're right, kid; but that ain't nothin' to me to figger out. I've been dressin' mill stones an' cuttin' them burrs ever since I was your age, an' it's allus been the same. Sometimes it's the wheat, sometimes the weather, but in the end it's as you say. P'raps it's the farmer, who asks too big a price."

"No, it's not any one of those causes," said Jack, meditatively. "It's that big engine down there eating up coal and the carrying charge to get the flour to market. That's what ails the business. Look, now; see that farmer with a load of wheat on the scales. There's father out there taking a handful out of one

sack and a cupful out of another. (Look out, dad, you may strike a nest of screenings shot into the middle of one of those sacks with a stove pipe.) He's bought the load and now it's going into the hopper, where it will in all probability be mixed with inferior grades. Then people complain the flour is no good, and you grind up a lot of corn meal and feed it back into the flour, or regrind with some middlings, until one can't tell whether it is flour or hog feed, and where are the profits? Now, let me tell you. I was listening the other day to that little alderman over in the second ward. He was talking politics and business, and when he was not roasting 'Bob' Ingersoll or General Grant he was making fun of Illinois River millers. He said—and you know what a big voice the little fellow has—he said this: 'There's a town up by St. Anthony's Falls that will turn out more flour in a day than we turn out in a week, and you know we are some pumpkins with our flour barrels, ain't we?'

"Say, kid, you're sure of what you just said?" asked the miller, interestedly.

"Sure as I live," replied Jack; "why?"

"Well, I'm goin' up to see that bit of water near St. Paul."

"The nearest town is Minneapolis, a little suburb of St. Paul," answered Jack, remembering his geography lessons.

Between oiling machinery, sacking bran, sewing flour sacks, heading barrels, sweeping, and occasionally "learning his trade," as he called it, over in the cooper shop, Jack got to be pretty well posted on the manufacture of flour, but he did not like the business and finally gave it up, deciding to take up the mercantile sphere and quit the field wherein the foundations of the most gigantic fortunes were just ready for the superstructure—flour, oil, harvest machinery and provisions, to say nothing of the contributory railway and telegraph business. He went to Boston, secured a position in a large wholesale establishment, lived in one of the beautiful suburban cities which surround the "Hub" on three sides, and there learned the lessons of prudence, sharp buying and economical, labor-saving methods, which were in contrast with the wastefulness and unsystematic methods prevalent in the great west. Not long after Jack was well established his father packed up the family belongings and moved where he could be with his son.

In a little country village fifty miles from Boston, on the Newburyport branch of the B. & M. R. R., lived Hazel Hemmingway. When Jack Sheppard was a pupil of Miss Freeman's in the old red school house back in the hills of western Massachusetts, he divided his apple with Hazel, dragged her white sled up hill in winter, and in summer made for her peachstone

baskets, which he whittled out with his "Barlow" knife. There was no girl in all the world to Jack that compared with the brown-eyed, brown-faced Hazel, and no boy in the school got so many cookies, bon-bons and dainty notes slipped into arithmetic or grammar as did Jack.

The parting when Jack's father moved to the west was full of tender good-byes and promises to "write real often" on the part of both—promises which each faithfully kept. As the years passed Mr. Hemmingway became interested in a shoe factory in the eastern part of the state and moved his family to the thriving little manufacturing town. The correspondence continued between the twain, and when Jack returned to Boston a girl to womanhood grown knew that a supplementary reason caused the young man to select Boston, and that she was the supplement. Of course no one else ever dreamed the truth.

It was not long after Jack was established in the "Hub" that he made the first visit to Hazel in her new home, spending the Sabbath in the quaint old place which was within the pale of influence spread by the historic witchcraft of the ancients. The renewal of that childhood acquaintance needed no flint and steel to ignite the tiny spark of smouldering fire into a flame of enduring love. Jack sat dignified and martyr-like while the minister preached upon the evils which be-

set the young and dangers to the worldly-minded. "The vain glories of dress and fashion are an abomination of the Lord," said the man of God. Jack moved uncomfortably in his new suit of clothes, while Hazel from her choir seat telegraphed her convictions that the dominie was right, just to plague Jack. And when the admonition came, "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man," Jack said to himself, "A whip for a horse, a bridle for an ass and a rod for a fool's back."

At last the "fourthly" came to an end and so did the church service for the morning. Jack and Hazel wended their way to her home, where dinner awaited them, after which followed a walk under the far spreading elms that arched the roadway, and as they walked they talked of childhood pastimes, joking each other of forgotten jealousies, or dwelling upon indelibly impressed, attaching episodes, the remembrance of which were souvenirs, non-negotiable and indestructible. They had left the little village behind and reached a large pine grove where the Sunday-school picnic was annually held. Seating themselves upon a rustic bench, Jack told of his life in the far distant west, as the states bordering upon the Mississippi River were then called, finishing with his return to the east and plans for the future. Hazel was an attentive listener, interrupting occasionally to inquire what Ger-tie Whitcomb looked like, or if Eva Duncan was

freckled, or Nellie Courtney a good skater, as Jack included them in his biography of events.

"Not that it makes any difference, Jack, but I—er—er—just wanted to know," said Hazel, with the least bit of suspicion in her manner.

As he told of fastening Nellie's skates for her and of the lovely ice, the big crowds on the lake, and what a pretty girl Nellie was, Hazel kept time with her dainty foot kicking her broad-brimmed leghorn, which dangled by the string from her hand, finishing by poising the hat on her toe while she disinterestedly remarked, "Those western girls have such large feet; I suppose they have no trouble standing up on the ice," a remark which pleased the young man immensely, although he essayed no response.

When Jack reached his plans for the future Hazel became even more inclined to worry the historian by a rapid fire of insinuations.

"I suppose you will have to go on the road and take long trips out west to—sell goods? Shall you have the choice of territory when you get to be a salesman?" "Do those western stores carry as fine a line of goods as our folks do in the east?" "The styles out there are about two years behind ours; don't the girls look old fashioned?" To all of which Jack had one answer, "Yes."

"You can stop saying 'yes' all the time."

"I will, Hazel dear, on one condition—that you say 'yes.' "

"Yes," demurely answered Hazel.

Just then from a near-by hillside came the tattoo welcome of a cock partridge "drumming" for his mate, the measured, gradually increasing roar making the woods resound as Mr. Grouse beat the hollow log upon which he strutted up and down until his coquettish spouse approached within sight of her liege lord. She came, pecking negligently at snails and bugs, missing them oftener than hitting them, but she didn't care. She scratched at imaginary seeds, inattentively awaiting his pleasure. As soon as the cock perceived his bride he spread his tail like a fan, clucked a welcome and flew to her side.

"There, my dear," said Jack; "that is the way you must obey me when I am lord and master. Be very meek and let me do the splurging."

"And don't I get a chance to say a teeny, weensy word? Have I just got to listen, and watch the man of the house dry the dishes, get the breakfast (if we can't have a domestic) and"—Hazel rolled her eyes mockingly meek and with her hands "Now-I-lay-me-down-to-sleep" fashion, continued, "match samples for me at the store?" Jack capitulated; his grandeur collapsed "all at once and nothing first, just as bubbles do when they burst." Two merry peals of laughter echoed through the pine-scented woods.

"Sh! Jack, it is Sunday. I forgot all about it, and we must go home. Papa will wonder where I am," and a little red spot burned on each cheek as she surmized what "papa" would say when he found out that the young man from Boston "proposed to splurge."

But Jack's splurging was all make-believe. In the shadowy recesses of the great elms, as they retraced their steps toward the Hemmingway mansion, a manly arm stole about the waist of the lithesome girl, whose demure "yes" had to be sealed in order to make it real. Mr. Hemmingway was in the library as they entered the house. Jack nudged Hazel at the portentously contracted brows of papa and the stern look of inquiry which followed. Hazel quickly stepped into the hall, leaving Jack alone.

"Papa, Jack—Mr. Sheppard—wants to speak to you a moment," then she flew past the meekest man that ever tried to splurge.

"Mr. Hemmingway"—Jack got that far and it seemed as though every whisker in that stern face became a bristling bayonet. "I think you must be able to guess my mission."

"What? No—no. Jack, you—why, you are but a boy, and Hazel"—A softer, kindlier expression crept slowly into the face of the man whose only daughter he suddenly realized had become a woman. "Jack, I moved here to keep my child—to get her away

from the—from the—it is no use, though. I guess you will be good to her. Let me see, you are the boy who got such an awful whipping once because you would not be a tell-tale, and a boy that has that kind of grit, I guess, is the right stuff to be my son-in-law. Hazel”—

The stern old man went out upon the lawn as Hazel re-entered the library. A noise as of some one vigorously using a handkerchief broke the stillness, but even then the old man chuckled as he saw two figures silhouetted upon the curtain. “Celebrating my consent, I guess,” he soliloquized.

“Hazel, you had better pull down the green shade.” Then to himself, “These children have no conception of the propriety of things.”

CHAPTER II.

ON THE " FIRING LINE " OF CIVILIZATION.

The summer vacation period found Jack among the old hills of Bozrah, his first visit to the scenes of his childhood since making Boston his home. Six years' business and social life in and about the " Hub " launched Jack upon the world a polished gentleman, refined, cultured, energetic, well qualified to step into a position demanding more than ordinary ability.

The first panic in his experience had unsettled values, trade was at a standstill, confidence was lacking, men hoarded their wealth and the wheels of many mills ceased to turn, while mill hands idly walked the streets or sought labor in distant parts of the globe. The great electoral dispute of " eight to seven " still rankled in the minds of many, while those who cared not for that controversy found themselves unable to entertain the problems of manufacture until the changes anticipated in the tariff should be made by congress. Realizing that the east gave little promise or opportunity for a young man, Jack concluded, soon after his vacation ended, to resign his position and cast

his lot with the pioneer on the frontier, or, at least that he would visit Denver and see what the chances were there.

The breaking off of fast friendships was keenly felt; business and social acquaintances admired his "grit," as they called it, but were skeptical as to the ultimate results. Hazel had become a frequent visitor at the Sheppard mansion and made it her "home-in-law," as she called it, whenever fancy took her cityward. She happened to be there when Jack declared himself.

"I've resigned my job and am going to Colorado within a month."

"Jack Sheppard! What? Going to Colorado? Going to leave Boston? Indians! You'll come home without any scalp!"

Such was the chorus which greeted his simple announcement. Hazel cried, his mother cried, his sisters moped around, and his father patted him on the back. "Go and see the world, broaden out, the experience will be worth the cost, even if you don't stay," he said, with lots of emphasis on the experience.

Five days from Boston to Denver. Everything was the old, old story of farms, villages and small cities until the train left Kansas City, then the arid plains opened wider and wider, the towns grew farther and farther apart, less and less in size until what was

marked a station on the trip ticket given him by the conductor proved on arrival to be a platform, a water tank and a cowboy straddle of a "buckskin," white-eyed broncho. These scenes in truth were new and Jack's experience had commenced. Occasionally the water tank was supplemented by a saloon. Great herds of cattle grazed along the unfenced right of way of the railroad, and the treeless expanse of never ending brown, sun-burned, alkali-spotted plains wearied the eye, the mind and soul in their wretched monotony. The slow-going "fire wagon," drawing its burden of weary humanity, puffed laboriously along the hot iron pathway toward the setting sun at a speed so slow that many a "cow puncher" tested the mettle of his hardy, sure-footed pony to the discomfiture of the iron horse and its attendant.

Antelope raced with the train and buffalo stood defiantly in the wallows, their lop-ended bodies appearing strangely out of proportion for sustaining the equilibrium necessary for feeding, fighting or flying. Prairie dogs barked their squeaky warnings, and wise looking little top-heavy owls flapped their wings lazily in an attempt to rise, only to fall awkwardly into the next dog village near by, as the train rumbled through the sand-duned desert. But all things have an end. So did the first journey to Denver. Within a week Jack met a mountain guide who told of the deer, the

bear, the trout in Middle Park. Within another week he had purchased an Indian pony, saddle, and provisions to last two for seven months, agreeing to follow the guide and trapper in his winter's occupation of securing pelts for market.

It took a month to reach the final spot selected for a cabin on Rock Creek, during which time Jack met many of the brave and weather-beaten, buckskin clad frontiersmen living on the fring line of civilization at the very threshold of savagedom. Men who drove the rude stakes marking pioneer advancement into the soil wrested from its occupants by purchase from a broken down dynasty, claiming discovery, a nation whose bigoted avariciousness blinded its foresight to the end of bartering away its last foothold on the great American continent.

The incidents from Denver to Rock Creek Jack enumerated in an improvised journal, greasy from continued usage in his endeavor to let nothing escape the record.

"First night: Slept on the floor of a grocery store, twenty miles from Denver, a buffalo robe between me and the boards.

"Second night: Slept in the hay in a barn at Georgetown.

"Third day: A. M. Homesick. The trapper not ready to go into Middle Park; must wait four days.

All my money left in Denver. Supposed we would have no use for money, as all our worldly provisions and needs would be on the wagon or pack animals, but the provisions are coming by rail and we eat at a restaurant in the mining town where the railway terminates. As my money is gone and no provisions here, I am at a loss to satisfy hunger.

“Third day: P. M. Heard some dogs barking away up on the side of the mountain; asked the butcher if he would buy a wild goat if I killed one. It was goats that made the dogs bark, goats that once were civilized but had strayed away and became wild. Shouldered my rifle and climbed that awful stretch of snow-covered slide rock at the imminent peril of starting an avalanche and destroying the whole town. Killed a goat, a black one. Shot him in the shoulder just where “Swiftfoot, the scout,” would have planted a bullet, but the goat would not or did not die, so I shot him again through the neck. Then I plunged my steel into him and saw the life-blood gush all over me and the snow, then I dragged the goat by his horns down the mountain side. There were places so steep that the goat went faster than I did, so it was a case of goat dragging me. Finally landed at the same time the goat did, at the bottom of the long gulch; tied the goat’s legs together and hung him across my back on my rifle barrel. Walked uncon-

cernedly past the butcher shop to the restaurant, where I deposited the goat on a box in the back yard. The perilous adventure netted me my meals for four days, three dollars in United States money and one Mexican dollar. I was not homesick again."

Another interesting item in his graphic description of the country so new to him:

"We left Georgetown in early morning to cross the range. From timber line on the eastern slope of the great Atlantico-Pacifico water shed, winding around Gray's Peak, serpentinely descending to the Frazier River through Middle Park to our cabin site on Rock Creek one hundred and fifty miles, is one unbroken cheerless blanket of snow, covering irregular sage brush grown mesas sloping to the river banks, along whose sides grow stretches of heavy, coarse grass suitable for wintering hardy, range-grown stock. Cultivation of any of the land is still an unsolved problem. The residents of this great unregistered section live in log cabins. Neighbors are 'near' who occupy claims within ten miles of each other. The one county, Grand, represents more territory than Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island put together. No section lines mark the maps, no organized arrangement of district or circuit courts interferes with the 'administration' of 'justice' when disputes have to be adjudicated. Generally the one quickest with a gun

has the law on his side. The people are willing to share beds and grub with each other and strangers; a feeling akin to insult being awakened if payment be tendered for hospitality even of several days' duration, excepting, of course, regularly established quarters where stage coaches change horses and provision is made for the accommodation of summer tourists. Every man is a blacksmith, carpenter, tinker, tailor, cook, chamberman, physician, nurse, even undertaker and grave digger when occasion demands. The food is the most primitive known in a civilized land—bread, venison or elk meat, occasionally antelope, bear, mountain sheep, always bacon and black coffee, and dried prunes, peaches or apples furnish fruit if the ranchman's ambition fires him sufficiently to stew sauce. Occasionally a ranchman has milch cows, which add butter and cream to the simple fare. Vegetables are a scarce commodity, except for a case or two of canned corn, tomatoes, succotash and baked beans, the latter being a dish utterly impossible of being prepared in high altitudes without the aid of baking soda to soften the bean; even then unless great care is taken the alkali spoils the flavor of this toothsome Boston creation. Buckskin and heavy woolen underclothes form the general run of garments, an outer protecting duck coat and overalls being worn to a large extent. White goods as wearing apparel, table or bed furnishings are

seldom found, much less used. Time is reckoned by 'sun ups,' 'snows' and the mail carrier. In event of the latter being a day late or ahead, the fact is recorded, or every one would eventually lose complete track of dates, Sunday likely as not being observed in name in the middle of the week."

Jack kept his record straight for a month and then lost the combination entirely for eighteen days. There were no churches, no schools, and but one voting precinct in the whole of Grand County. Ward primaries had not been established and politics centered in a justice of the peace, sheriff, and county judge, none of whom accumulated wealth from office emoluments.

On Thanksgiving Day Jack's last officially correct entry in his log book noted the thermometer as "frozen up," subsequent days for a long period recording "a little colder," "much colder," "terribly cold."

The fifth day from Hot Sulphur Springs found the trapper and his pupil on the west slope of the Gore or Park range, encountering a terrific snowstorm, in the midst of which they stumbled into a band of elk which made Jack forget all his troubles of keeping the trail, the difficulty of keeping the big wagon box on runners from upsetting and himself from freezing. As the big animals loomed up in the clouds of snow flakes driven pitilessly into his face he suddenly re-

called the oft-told stories of "buck fever," and for fear this dread disease would shatter his nerves he waited the arrival of the experienced trapper. The band was moving slowly down the ravine, not seeming to notice their enemy—man.

"Shoot 'em, why don't you shoot? Careful now, and get that big bull with his flank turned toward you. There, give him another, quick! Again! before he gets out of sight—you've got him!" And Jack saw his first wapiti plunge to his knees, recover, bound sideways and then again lunge with his nose plowing deep into the snow, his hind legs straining at the earth for a support, only to sink in a last effort, and the "monarch of the forest" was Jack's prize. It was but a few moments' work to knot a lariat to a hind leg and by the aid of his Indian pony drag the carcass to a tree, hang the body out of reach of wolves and coyotes, then seek a suitable location for a camp, which in that storm was no easy matter. For hours it had been unload, dig the sled out of a deep bank of snow, load up again and flounder a few rods, only to repeat the process. The diversion of killing an elk gave a rest of half an hour, then another attempt was made to cross a small park before night should envelop them in her black mantle. About half way, however, the horses floundered into a drift which accumulated over the spongy surface of a willow-banked ravine, the sled

pitched its nose down deep, the trapper swore, and Jack wanted to.

"Guess we better 'cache' our stuff and get over thar in the timber and let the 'dod gasted' blizzard play itself out," said the man of many winters' experience. "You have done mighty well for a tenderfoot. An old-timer couldn't have done better in tramping snow and breaking trail than you have. This is about as bad a storm as you will ever get into. When it snows so you can't see the horses' heads in front of you it gets about the limit."

"Can we find the provisions if we leave them here?" questioned Jack.

"Yes, you get that long dead sapling over there and we will stick it up beside the pile, throw that wagon sheet over the top, and then we'll drive some tent pins to fasten the corners to. There now—Hi! there, you!" The horses gave a pull and the almost empty sled followed. In a few minutes the edge of the timber was reached and Jack commenced to scrape away the snow preparatory for a camp fire. The old trapper decided it best to put coverings on the horses and turn them loose. It was too stormy to picket them, too cruel to tie them up short, and unless blankets were fastened on them they would make a bee line back to Hot Sulphur.

When Jack had broken dry twigs from the ends of

overhanging branches and found a "blazed" spot on a pine tree which promised a good pitch-soaked kindler, and gathered a lot of dead timber, he made ready to light his fire. The wind drove the snow in avalanches. No one could ever light a match in that gale, and when he reached the time for lighting, he found but one match. He had lost his tin match-box and the stock box was in the "cache," which was by that time under two feet of snow. Carefully making a little "lean to" out of a rubber blanket, he first "warmed" the match against his flannel shirt up in the armpit, to absorb any dampness in the sulphur, then with trepidation and fear he carefully drew the yellow end across the inside of his duck coat, a crack, a choking cloud of sulphur, a sputter of burning brimstone blue and feeble, then a stronger yellow flame and the camp fire was assured. Throwing off the "lean to" the wind drove the flames against the big pile of firewood and soon the cheerful warmth melted a space in the snow big enough to call a camp. It was no easy matter to cook supper, and there was little comfort standing around afterwards, so both made ready for bed. The "lean to" was again the resort for a shelter for the night, as a tent could not be made secure in that storm in frozen ground.

Carefully fastening one end of the canvas to the

wagon, and pegging the other to the ground near the fire, a bed was improvised with the rubber blanket next to the snow, then the blankets, eleven in all, the "lean to" tucked in all around—and Jack went to sleep with the wind driving its icy breath through the thick pine forest or shrieking as it caught the naked, ghostlike branches of a leafless aspen. The morning found them almost buried under the snow, but none the worse otherwise.

It was noon before the horses were found and brought back by the trapper, and that evening the camp was pitched only a mile from the other side of the "cache." The storm went down with the sun and the cold intensified until the biting blasts hurled across the open gate to Egeria Park were to the unprotected face like knife slashes.

For two days melted snow had served for cooking, drink for horses, and washing purposes. A good square meal had been impossible to prepare, and a hungry night was in prospect for both man and beast. The trapper declared he would not turn the horses loose that night, so picking out a sheltered place among the pine trees he tied up all but "Ned," Jack's Indian pony, halter lengths, covered them with blankets and harnessed to keep the blankets on. The tent was pitched in a long deep cut, dug into an immense snow bank, to all appear-

ances a part of the big drift after it had been arranged for the night. The intensity of the cold was estimated at fifty degrees below zero and six pair of double blankets weighing eight pounds per pair were used as covering (Jack was actually tired when he awoke, from the weight of the bedding). Single thicknesses of blankets had to be drawn over the face to keep it from freezing. But with all these hardships the young man from the "States" thrived and grew hardy. No such thing as a cold or bodily ailment of any sort attacked either one.

The next night found them camped in a protected ravine near a stream from which water was obtained and some pretensions to comfort prevailed. For the first time elk meat formed a part of the evening meal, and a feeling of good cheer followed a hearty repast. The next morning as Jack climbed the side of the long south slope, covered with stunted sage brush, to get the horses that had found plenty of feed, he came face to face with a tawny-skinned animal that came up out of one ravine as Jack emerged from another, about a hundred yards apart. No firearms, not even a hunting knife, were at hand. To flee would be but an invitation to tempt the mountain lion to possible attack, so Jack sauntered along, carelessly as he could under the circumstances, in the direction of the ponies. The lion kept on his own course, crossing Jack's path

and eventually disappearing in a deep arroya, or gulch, all the while turning his head from side to side watching but not attempting to molest either Jack or the horses.

The next camping spot selected was on the bank of Rock Creek, where a bend of the stream deflected by high rocks left a well timbered, protected area, surrounded on three sides by precipitous slopes of the adjacent "benches" covered with sage brush, these "benches" or mesas extending to the high ridges towering above, one facing the north, the other the south, the former bleak and covered with deep snow, the latter, warm and sun-kissed, furnishing feed for horses. The building of a cabin occupied a few days, which, when equipped with a fireplace, a bunk having about eighteen inches of spruce boughs as a mattress, and other frontier conveniences, made a trapper's home.

Deer were abundant. In an evening or in the early morning hundreds of the great muleheaded species could be seen winding their way to and from the feeding grounds, or wandering aimlessly about. Traps were set out, bait doctored with "dead medicine" or poison tacked to trees and stumps where foxes, wolves and lions were likely to find it, and the regular life of "catching fur" was commenced.

A band of Ute Indians that had left the White

River Agency established their village two miles below the cabin at a point where Rock Creek joined another stream—Toponas, or “Pony”—and then flowed on to its confluence with the Grand River. These Indians became visitors to the cabin and among them Jack found one, Yamanatz, a friendly and peaceable savage.

The village was destitute of food and ammunition, in fact, no means were at their command for obtaining game, therefore they heralded the trappers' arrival with gladness, for they expected to be able to obtain powder and bullets with which to obtain venison.

The second visit Yamanatz made to the Rock Creek camp, he was accompanied by his beautiful daughter Chiquita, a girl of seventeen, richly attired in beaded skirt, leggings and moccasins. She rode astride of a magnificent chestnut brown, full-blooded Ute pony, a large Navajo blanket drawn tightly about her, Indian fashion. She carried a bow and from her back hung a quiver of arrows. Her well molded face was set in its frame of straight, black hair, braided in two long strands into which were interwoven pieces of lion skin, beaver fur and other bits of “medicine” charms to drive away evil spirits. A string of elk teeth adorned her neck and bands of heavy silver ornaments bedecked her arms.

Indians are similar to other folks in many respects. A proper introduction generally puts them on a gracious footing. It did not take long for Jack and Chiquita to strike up a fast friendship, and the old adage of "feed the brute" held good with both Indian buck and maiden.

The cabin was but partly "chinked" when the old trapper announced his intention of going to Hot Sulphur Springs.

"I left the old woman without enough wood and must go back to cut some for her. Then there are some other matters to attend to which will take a week or ten days, after which I will come back and bring what mail is at the Springs for you," he explained.

Little did Jack realize, in fact, he did not suspect, there might be other reasons for this sudden determination on the part of the trapper. It did not occur to him the seeming folly of a man leaving his wife unprovided with wood. The trip of a hundred miles or more in the dead of winter over unbroken trails was not so much of an obstacle for a man experienced in mountain life; but he did not then know that the Utes' camp was made up of some of the worst characters from the White River Agency, nor that the band was there against the wishes of Indian Agent Meeker, who had requested their return more than once,

Jack took the matter as one of the peculiar incidents in a trapper's life, for he had learned that a trapper has no conception of time, no thought for the days ahead, no particular object in view beyond existence, and no ambition beyond that of the prospector who indulges his fancies of "striking it rich" some day.

Jack knew there were plenty of provisions to last until summer, that the trapper would leave two horses and the sled, besides quite a valuable lot of traps, et cetera, which would insure his return sooner or later, so there were no misgivings when the mountaineer mounted his horse and rode away.

He busied himself day after day and accumulated furs and knowledge of frontier life.

These were the surroundings in which Jack found himself three months after leaving Boston.

CHAPTER III.

CATS, TRAPS, AND INDIANS.

The steady life of a trapper had become regular diet to Jack, as day after day he visited old traps, set out new ones and explored territory farther away from the cabin. The Indians were daily visitors whether he was in camp or not, but they never molested anything, no matter how curious or hungry. They were seemingly good humored, even though there appeared an undercurrent of dissatisfaction. The first episode to put him on his guard was when one of the Utes, Bennett, hid behind a tree near the camp fire outside the cabin. Yamanatz was there in his customary place, squatted upon the ground. A strange dog ran in and out of the place and Jack inquired of the old Ute how the dog happened to be there. Yamanatz, unconcerned, replied, "Me dunno." This puzzled Jack, but he went about his cooking, carefully watching the trees and rocks. He felt for the first time a species of alarm. Again he inquired, "Ute dog, mebbe so?"

"Me dunno."

Jack knew no white man would go along that trail at that time of year without stopping to say "How!" In fact, there was no white man within forty miles, except old Joe Riggs, and old Joe would be there with the dog if the dog was Joe's. The suspense had a sudden termination as the muzzle of a rifle "mirrored" in the sunlight, just the tip of the muzzle being thus accidentally disclosed. Quick as a flash Jack pulled his six shooter, cocked it and held it level at the tree where the bright steel was in full view. Yamanatz made neither sign nor comment, but Jack felt that the cunning old chief was fully aware of all that was going on. Very soon the edge of a woolen turban cap appeared opposite the rifle muzzle; then an ear, then a little of the chin and finally the eye of Bennett looked straight into Jack's six shooter. With a bound the joker jumped from behind the tree and, with a laugh which could have been heard a mile, and in which Yamanatz joined, came forward, palms outward, signifying peace, exclaiming, "White man no 'fraid; heap big joke, heap big joke."

But Jack began to feel that these jokes might end in something serious, especially if he showed the white feather in the least.

The next day he returned from the traps just as the last streaks of sunlight were tipping the tops of the cañon where Rock Creek dashed by the cabin. Yama-

natz sat by the cold camp fire in the same place and same position in which Jack had left him after breakfast, six hours before. Of course, Jack was surprised at this and wondered what it meant. As Jack swung into the open space Yamanatz immediately arose with hands outstretched, the palms well up towards the comer, accompanying the action with this eager outburst:

"Yamanatz heap glad to see white man Jack; Colorow come. White man gone. Colorow heap mad, want to see white man. Me tell 'em white man gone, Colorow follow white man; byme by Antelope come look for Colorow; Antelope go back Indian village by Pony Creek. Antelope tell Utes Colorow mean mischief; Colorow's boy come byme by look for Colorow; when Yamanatz tell Colorow's boy 'Colorow follow white man,' Colorow's boy heap 'fraid, say: 'Mebbe so Colorow meet 'em white man Jack.' Then Colorow's boy go Indian village. Sun low—Chiquita come, no find white man, go back Indian village, mebbe so white man see Colorow?"

Jack, of course, was nervous. Alone in a wild country that was alive with wild game, ravenous wolves, mountain lions, bears and hostile Indians, he realized what a novice, a tenderfoot, a fool he was, or would be, to put his ignorance of frontier life against the cunning of the old chiefs, but he answered quickly,



YAMANATZ.

"Me no see Colorow." Then taking courage by the kindly look in Yamanatz's eyes, Jack said slowly, taking Yamanatz's hands in his own.

"Mebbe so Colorow want to kill white man Jack?"

Yamanatz shrugged his shoulders but made no answer and Jack continued.

"If Colorow meet white man, Colorow got no bullets—got knife—suppose white man kill Colorow, will Utes kill white man?"

Yamanatz evaded the question but made the reply: "Colorow heap bad Indian, mebbe so make heap trouble. Utes 'fraid Colorow—big chief 'fraid Colorow. White man mebbe so kill Colorow, no tell what 'em happen. Old Utes not much care. Antelope, Bennett, Douglas, Washington. Mebbe so heap mad, kill all white men if white man Jack kill Colorow."

In this honest avowal Jack found little comfort, but Yamanatz's next words gave him a hope that all might be well.

"Utes got no lead, no powder, no deer meat. Mebbe so Colorow take many ponies, go Sulphur Springs, get 'em bullets, bacon, flour, then be good Injun till all gone."

In this logic of plenty to eat lay the safety of the white trappers for that winter, so Jack prayed fervently for the early departure of the Indians for Sulphur Springs to the end of his own personal safety.

He knew now that certain sign language the Utes had so often indulged in represented Agent Meeker in his attempts to teach the Indians how to plow; that bits of tragic, practical joking were tests of his own bravery, and that the uneasy red devils but waited opportunity and excuse for an uprising, after they should obtain the necessary munitions of war, of which they had none.

Chiquita grew more and more interested in the ways of the pale face with each visit, and Jack found her waiting for his return oftener, even following him portions of the route in his attentions to the traps. Her desire for knowledge seemed to him incomprehensible and old Yamanatz was equally at a loss to understand why his daughter should prefer to hear about her white sisters' habits and what they did, rather than matters of more moment. When she finally told Yamanatz her desire to do wonderful things, such as building a big "medicine tepee" with lots of Indian maidens in "medicine clothes" to care for the sick, the aged and infirm, the old chief's face gladdened and his actions spoke louder than words, so that Jack knew it was safe to humor them both in their dream.

Within a few days Yamanatz sprung a joke on Jack that left Bennett's fun hanging high and dry on the trees. Chiquita had arrayed herself in more gorgeous

raiment than had been recorded of a society debutante in Indian stories—beaded cape, waist, shirt, leggings, and moccasins; medals of gold, silver and pewter; ornaments of brass, tin and iron; necklaces of elk teeth and grizzly claws; hair decorations of lion skin, beaver and otter fur, and in her hand a rawhide shield just dazzling with highly polished brass knobs. Her bright eyes fairly danced with joy as she posed before Jack in her "Sunday best." Yamanatz watched her with that same benevolent kindness which characterized him above other Utes. After the usual salutations, the old chief took a leather bag from the saddle and opened it, turning its contents upon Jack's best dish towel, which happened to be near. To say that Jack's heart jumped is drawing it very mild. The contents of the bag were gold nuggets from the size of a mustard seed to a navy bean and there was at least a quart.

Yamanatz saw the sparkle in Jack's eyes and laconically remarked, "Sabe?"

"Heap big gold mine somewhere?" asked Jack,

To which question Yamanatz made two replies—"Me dunno; mebbe so."

Jack waited for him to continue, wondering what reason the two Utes had for appearing as they did, one in royal raiment, the other with a good sized ransom, for Jack estimated that there was twenty pounds of pure gold worth twenty dollars an ounce, or in all nearly five thousand dollars.

"Does the white man sabe?" again inquired Yamanatz.

"Me no sabe, no sabe," Jack shook his head.

Chiquita now spoke up. "Does the white man sabe, what you call 'em when white sister learn A, B, C?"

"School?"

Chiquita shook her head.

"College?" asked Jack.

This time she nodded her head and pointed to the gold. "How much cost Chiquita in college?"

It dawned on him that Chiquita wanted to go to college and that Yamanatz would furnish the necessary money to defray the expenses. Visions of a red savage in full forest costume ascending the steps of a great university or college was too much for Jack and he had to laugh, much to the disgust of his friends, but he quickly restored good faith.

Yamanatz put his finger to his tongue, indicating that he did not lie. "Yamanatz's tongue not split, no lie. Yamanatz show white man Jack heap big pile gold, some for Jack, some for Chiquita. White man take Chiquita, do as Chiquita say."

Jack was puzzled; he thought they were bargaining in a matrimonial deal, and he saw a little brown-eyed girl back East peering through the camp fire at him.

Chiquita, however, came to his rescue. "Yama-

natz has said it. White man take Chiquita college. Chiquita learn, heap study, make Chiquita like white sister. Yamanatz show Jack heap big mine, lots gold, some for Jack; some for Chiquita."

As he at last comprehended this great undertaking—the stupendous task of educating a blanket Indian girl in a modern college of refined Caucasians—Jack was dismayed, even more so than the matrimonial possibility had suggested, for he could get out of that, but here was a poser. Perhaps the colleges would draw the line on Indians as some institutions did on negroes. As he made no answer Chiquita continued.

"How many moons take Chiquita college?"

Jack answered slowly, "Take Chiquita four snows little A, B, C's, two snows big A, B, C's, four snows college."

Both Yamanatz and Chiquita understood, and Chiquita replied, "Ten snows Chiquita like white sister, know heap?"

Jack nodded "Yes," but in his heart he did not believe she would in a hundred years be any more than a half-educated savage, under the most rigid masters.

Yamanatz then spoke up. "How much gold Jack want make Chiquita like white sister?"

Jack made a rough estimate and ventured at a thousand dollars a year, "Twelve thousand dollars."

Yamanatz could not understand so much money in

American coin, so he talked with Chiquita, then pointed at the pile of gold nuggets.

Jack held up three fingers, meaning three times as much to make sure. Yamanatz looked scornfully at the three fingers, then pointed at the big grain bag in which Jack had his sugar, saying, "Yamanatz show Jack where get a big bag full. Some for Jack and some for Chiquita, if Jack promise Yamanatz take Chiquita"—but Chiquita had to supply the word "college."

Jack pondered a long time while the would-be college girl and her father watched his ever varying expression as he thought, "How can it be done?" He finally agreed to make the attempt and replied: "Jack will take Chiquita to the A, B, C school, then a little bigger school, then college. He will see Chiquita become a great queen if Yamanatz so speaks."

"It shall be so. Yamanatz will show Jack a big cave of gold where the sun goes down. Blazing-Eye-By-The-Big-Water, heaps of gold, and Yamanatz will give it half to Jack, half to Chiquita and Chiquita shall be a big queen." Then they both smoked the pipe of tobacco pledging each in their mission.

Afterwards the more detailed plan was arranged. Yamanatz indicated that in the early spring they would start for the cave of gold, which he explained was in a great sun-burned valley where no life existed

except snakes and scorpions; furthermore, that the trip to the cave was one of deadly peril and hardships.

“The Great Manitou gave to the Utes this cave of gold. Many big chief go to the land of the setting sun and bring back plenty gold. Yamanatz the last chief who can show Jack, and when Yamanatz go to the Happy Hunting Ground the big cave is all for Jack and Chiquita.”

Solemnly he outlined all the details for the undertaking. As they finished, Yamanatz gathered up the gold nuggets and handed the bag to Jack, saying, “This is for white man—Yamanatz has more.”

Jack hid the gold in his war bag, after the chief and his gorgeously arrayed daughter had gone, then he pondered long over the unexpected mission upon which he found himself launched and his dreams were full of colleges, gold mines and savages being educated.

It was nearing Christmas time and the snow was deep on the mountain side. The warm sun penetrated the cañons but a few hours each day. Chiquita had become a daily visitor to the camp fire, near which she would sit and listen to Jack as he told of the wonders of the civilized world. Chiquita knew many English words of common usage and Jack knew as many Mexican, or rather a mixture of Spanish, Mexican and Indian, which, with the sign language, did service in

these conversations. "Tell Chiquita how many sleeps Rock Creek to Denver City."

"Six sleeps," was the reply of Jack, meaning it was a six days' ride on horseback.

"Sabe usted the great white chief at Washington City?" was the next query, meaning the President of the United States.

"Me sabe."

"Tell Chiquita how many sleeps on the cars Washington City from Denver City."

"Five sleeps on the cars Denver City to Washington City."

Jack happened to have in his kit a railroad map of the United States and with this spread before them on a blanket, he would point out Rock Creek and then explain the distances from one place to another, telling of the great buildings, the industries, the immense amount of fuel used in the big shops and the number of men employed in making guns, wagons, saddles, harness, boots, blankets and the like, articles that appeared in the camp and which were in everyday use at the White River Agency. This was a very arduous but pleasing task, in that it required all of Jack's ingenuity to portray the information intelligently, and frequently Chiquita would be the instructor because of her better ability, as a child of the forest, to convey thought by means of signs and comparative objects.

He taught her the alphabet, also words of one and two syllables, and she showed how wonderful is the Indian mind in its retention of the slightest impression when the will power to receive it is acquiescent.

"Tell Chiquita, does the white man's squaw carry the wood for the fire so the warrior can cook his venison?"

"No," said Jack, laughing, "the warrior of the white man is the soldier at the fort."

Chiquita interrupted quickly, a deep scowl causing her inky black eyebrows to meet over her flashing eyes, and with her head thrown back, displaying the full, rounded throat, her beautiful arm bared save for the wide beaded bracelets and amulets, she pointed to the sky, almost hissing through her marvelously white teeth, "Chiquita comprehends, the warrior of the white man is the hired pale face, sent by the Great White Chief at Washington City to slay my people; even now mebbe so the hired man rides to take Chiquita back to the White River; but her people are brave. Her people were as the stars above, as the drops that make the big river, but they are gone to the Great Spirit, where their ponies await their coming in the Happy Hunting Ground that the pale face knows not of, and to where the spirit of Chiquita will some day fly. Let the white man Jack beware. It is well for him that Yamanatz is his friend, and Chiquita

will see that no harm comes to the friend of Yamanatz. Mebbe so Colorow is no friend of the white man Jack, but Colorow has no bullets. The gun of Colorow is empty, but the knife in the belt of Colorow is pointed. It is sharp and the arm of Colorow is as the young tree, and his step is as the step of the fawn when the dew is on the grass. Let the white man Jack beware. Colorow will come to tell the white man to go to the land which was taken from Colorow's people; that this is the Utes' land and that the Utes will no more let the white man hunt the deer and trap the wolf, which run by the tepee of the red man. So let the white man Jack be cunning and let not Colorow find the white man asleep under the big tree."

She was all excitement. The cords stood out upon her graceful throat, while her rounded cheeks crimsoned as the frosted leaf in the autumn time. Jack was spellbound as the words of that eloquent warning fell upon his ears, but at the last subdued, almost beseeching plea, he started as if the knife was already at his throat, for it was but yesterday, in the warm sunshine far beyond the snowy range, at noon time, he had taken a short nap under a big pine tree, where a bed of pine needles made an inviting spot, little dreaming that a living being, much less an Indian, was within five miles of him. Chiquita guessed his thoughts, and in that musical tone found only among

the old blanket Indian tribes, told Jack how she followed him and Colorow from the camp on Rock Creek, fearing all the while that that cunning war chief would slay the young man, from the east and upset all plans of Chiquita becoming a medicine tepee queen.

Chiquita knew that Colorow, of all the discontented Utes on Rock Creek, desired especially to be rid of Jack's presence. That the old warrior had a grudge against the trapper was evident, and the trapper's departure, leaving Jack alone to attend to the traps, was to her mind clear proof that Colorow had been instrumental in causing the departure.

She had heard the leaders of the renegade band denounce all trappers who sought the region contiguous to the White River reservation, and in particular the trapper who had built the cabin on Rock Creek. She knew that this trapper had the winter before wantonly killed seventy-six elk, which he had stumbled upon in a little willow grown park where the deep snow had stalled them, and that he did not kill any more because his ammunition had given out. She knew that the Utes, as well as the white settlers, had in unmeasured terms condemned this wanton slaying of so much game, but she did not think this episode was the cause of Colorow's animosity. There was but one reason that sufficed in her opinion. She believed Colorow had told the trapper to abandon the camp under pen-

alty of death if he remained, and she reasoned that the trapper went alone because he had been ashamed to tell Jack the truth. Consequently Jack would be the next to go, and as she already knew that Colorow had openly declared his intention of driving the young paleface away, she determined to watch that cunning Ute every day and give him no opportunity for any hostile movement against Jack.

The gray dawn of the day referred to in her impassioned warning found Chiquita swiftly and silently making her way toward the Rock Creek cabin, where she took up a position commanding a view of the camp and the trails leading to it.

The first rays of the sun were just tipping the snow on the high mountain peaks when Jack came from the cabin and proceeded to get his breakfast over the camp fire. As Chiquita watched him she was tempted many times to make her presence known, for the savory viands made her "heap hungry," but at last Jack started up the gulch on his rounds to the traps. Chiquita knew that Colorow would put in an early appearance, expecting to find Jack at the cabin, so she waited patiently. It was not long before she heard the plaintive call of a camp bird mewing for something to eat, and she mimicked it, saying to herself, "camp bird and Colorow all same." She carefully screened herself in the willows and saw Colorow sud-

denly dart from one big tree to another, then creep to a big rock, wait a moment and glide along until he was close to the cabin. He waited some time, evidently reading by the signs of the smoldering fire that the object of his visit had made an early start. Seeing this, he boldly walked out and picked up the coffee pot. As it was empty he threw it spitefully down into the ashes and looked for a piece of bread. Being disappointed in this also he made a big fuss of brandishing his knife, executing a few steps as though he had discovered an enemy and in pantomime had slain and scalped him. During this time he kept up a continual jargon of curses and imprecations.

Finally he drew back the blanket which constituted the "door" of the cabin and peered in. Satisfied with his observations, he carefully scanned the trail leading up the gulch, and seeing the fresh made tracks, set out rapidly after Jack.

Chiquita followed, darting along from one side of the trail to the other or diverging obliquely across portions of the territory which she knew Jack had to traverse in order to examine the traps, knowing Colorow would ultimately appear.

The sun had reached the meridian when she noted the Indian standing under a big tree watching intently something not far distant from him. Pretty soon she saw a thin spiral of white smoke gradually

becoming more dense as if from burning damp wood, and occasionally she could hear the crackle of the flames. She knew Jack was busy getting a little lunch. She scented the bacon as he toasted it before the fire and again she felt that ravenous gnawing which now was doubly aggravating.

The cooking evidently made Colorow furious, for he vanished into some brush and made noises as of a wolf growling with hunger just as he prepares to tear at a bone. Then the Indian disappeared down the ever handy gulch to watch Jack in his effort to find the wolf.

Jack proceeded to investigate, and, with gun ready, he entered the brush, but there were so many signs of wolf tracks, fresh ones, too, that he was at a loss to understand where they could so suddenly have disappeared.

As he slowly returned to his lunch camp—a spot free from snow in a little pine grove where the sun shone bright and warm—he passed very near where Chiquita was hiding, and then discovered a moccasin track, which he examined critically. He knew the track had been made since sunrise, but could not tell whether before or after he started to make his little camp fire. He carefully set his big boot alongside the footprint, making a deep impression in the earth. He also deposited the end of one of his rifle bullets in

the moccasin track, feeling sure that the owner of the moccasin was sure to discover the significance thereof. Colorow saw the action from his hiding place, but well knew that a hunting knife was of little avail against a fearless man protected by a rifle, six-shooter and belt full of ammunition.

Jack looked at the sun, then at Rock Creek a long way off, and sat down to smoke a pipeful of tobacco. The pleasing, soothing narcotic made him drowsy and he fell asleep.

Colorow made a circle around the camp and in doing so discovered the trail which Jack had made on previous trips from the little grove. This led toward a big gulch which was divided at the lower portion by a steep ridge. Colorow took the one showing the most usage and ambushed himself in a thicket close to Pony Creek, at a point convenient to a spot where Jack would be obliged to pass within leap of the hidden foe. Here he waited.

Chiquita watched Colorow disappear down the gulch and divined his purpose, then returned to see Jack as he awakened and witness his surprise at having so forgotten his prudence.

Picking up his rifle and skins Jack started swiftly down the gulch, intending to follow the one selected by Colorow, as he had some venison protected by two big traps and was certain to get at least a bobcat there.

But at the last moment he changed his mind or neglected to watch the trail and entered the left-hand gulch.

It was getting late when he discovered his error, but decided not to retrace his steps, and the ridge was too precipitous to climb at that point.

Chiquita followed Jack to Pony Creek and on down to where it joined Rock Creek. Then Jack went to his cabin and Chiquita to the Indian village, where she later saw Colorow come in, baffled in his mission, at least for the time being.

Jack now thoroughly realized the dangerous position in which he was placed and made up his mind to protect himself very carefully against any mishap. He knew that Colorow would not dare to attack him openly, and that safety depended on constantly guarding against all chance of surprise.

"Jack is heap glad to hear Chiquita tell of how she watches for the white man's safety. Does Chiquita sabe?" said Jack in a half apologetic manner, speaking abstractedly and not knowing what was best to say under the circumstances. His mind was taken up with the uncertainties of "good Indians." He wanted to trust Yamanatz and Chiquita, but did not know how far either one would dare to go in their evident desire to protect him. His recent talk with Yamanatz, of less than a week before, was pictured

vividly in Chiquita's story of her long day's tramp and vigil over him, and he knew that if Colorow made any attempt at his life in the presence of either Chiquita or Yamanatz, they might resist, but even their resistance would possibly be unavailing.

Making an early start on the day following to go the reversed route of the trip during which he had taken the nap Chiquita had so graphically described, Jack found himself in the gulch where the venison lay and a couple of bobcats in the traps near the carcasses. Killing and skinning these took some time, and with the heavy pelts added to a haunch of deer meat, Jack found it no easy task to climb to the top of the snowy ridge, down which he must go in order to reach camp. The frozen, well-worn trail he must reach before darkness set in, but despite his most desperate exertion it was some time after daylight had departed that he reached the long stretch of white covered slope. Not a trail could he find—not a welcome footprint to guide him over the deep ravines filled with snow, or away from precipitous rocks where a misstep would land him far below. There was but one course to take—straight down the mountain side. Throwing away caution, he started on a swift swinging trot, each foot breaking the crust of snow beneath him. Arriving at the edge of a ravine, which appeared only smooth snow, he went into it up to his

waist; then, thoroughly alarmed, he struggled deeper into the ravine until the snow was up to his armpits. His revolver was lost and wolves were already giving tongue to dismal howls as the air carried to their nostrils the scent of the venison to which Jack clung.

His unequal combat with the yielding snow gradually exhausted his strength and, growing each moment weaker, tired nature finally succumbed, and he fell unconscious. But the cold air quickly revived him. Nearer and nearer came those dreadful deep-mouthed tongue signals, augmented by additional ones from new directions and made still more heart-breaking by the yippy-yappy of a bunch of coyotes which also joined the big timber wolves. The six-shooter was found first, then Jack used a little reason. Taking off his coat and placing the furs and coat as a support on the snow, he rolled over and over until his foot struck solid earth. Then gathering his furs and leg of venison, he more carefully descended, his enemies keeping at a safe distance, for in America wild animals of any sort rarely attack man when not molested, even in the dead of winter.

Slipping and sliding, he at last reached camp, only to find both feet badly frozen at the heels and toes. As he cut his boots off and plunged his extremities into the cold water a whole lot of adventure went out of his heart with the frost.

CHAPTER IV.

OLD JOE RIGGS.

It was Sunday, the eighth day after Jack had taken that memorable trip so near unto death. In the warm sunshine at Rock Creek camp the major part of the day had been passed by the young hunter in writing up his journal, carefully jotting down all the incidents of latest development, even to the extra spread given in his honor to himself and three imaginary guests. He, being present, had a good meal, but the "invited" guests had to feast by proxy. The menu started with a hambone soup, and a nice broiled mountain trout, captured in a big hole where Pony and Rock Creek join forces. Winter trout being so great a luxury, Jack forgot his table etiquette and asked for a second portion, and being refused, he made a fierce onslaught upon the piece de resistance, no more and no less than a blue grouse roasted before the fire, as they roasted turkeys in the days of the Pilgrim Fathers. Jack used one of the metal joints of the cleaning rod belonging to his rifle as a spit, and as he turned the bird slowly

and basted it with venison fat he wondered, if his guests could really drop in for a moment, what they would say about his culinary efforts. The bird was stuffed with real sage dressing; not quite so good as mother used to make, as the mountain sage is a trifle stronger. When finished the grouse was garnished with juniper berries and spruce buds, these being the winter food of the grouse. There was a distinct flavor of the juniper in the meat. Then came an entree of young elk brains and another of Big Horn kidney stew. Jack was shy on vegetables of any kind, except Rock Creek baked beans, cooked all night in a Dutch oven sunk in the hot ashes of the camp fire; two kinds of bread, baking powder and sour dough, the first being hot biscuit, the latter nice big slices of cold white bread, never free from the name it bears. Stewed prunes and baked apple dumpling constituted the pastry, while black coffee in a tin cup and sparkling Rock Creek water served for liquids.

Jack had finished the "dishes," the last rattle of tin plates, pans, cup and skillets had re-echoed from the depths of the "china" closet, and he had settled himself for a chat with his pipe, when Chiquita bounded into camp all excitement and panting for breath.

"Colorow gone Sulphur Springs. Take 'em many ponies" (counting forty with her fingers). "All Utes except old men and Yamanatz go too. Mebbe so come

back with bullets, powder, bacon, flour," and she stopped to breathe.

Jack contemplated, and while he did so Chiquita cast wistful eyes at the remains of the midday banquet. The longing expression was not a new one to Jack. He knew from experience that Chiquita was a good eater, in fact all Indians had that failing, so he motioned the belle of the village to a seat on the end of a log near by and proceeded to dish her up a square meal. He knew that Yamanatz would be coming along soon, so he reserved some odds and ends for him. When Chiquita had advanced far enough so she could have time between mouthfuls—not bites—to answer, Jack gave utterance to his thoughts.

"Colorow's ponies make pretty big track in snow—make heap big trail. Mebbe so good for two sleeps on high mountain where wind blow."

Chiquita understood and stopped her struggles, with a rib of venison in one hand and a grouse wing in the other, long enough to articulate:

"Chiquita comprehends. White man follow Utes; white man leave Chiquita and Yamanatz to go Sulphur Springs, mebbe so Denver City."

Her smiles were gone, but not her appetite, as she renewed her attacks on the remnant counter. Jack replied:

"Mebbe so Jack be gone four moons. Come back

when honeysuckle on mountainside and cactus on plain in bloom. Will Chiquita and Yamanatz go then with Jack to Blazing-Eye-by-Big-Water?"

Jack decided to get out of the Ute country while the scalp was yet on his head and not dangling at the belt of any warrior, or braided into the make-up of any tepee pole. Just then the clatter of two ponies down the trail caused him to look around. In a moment or two the willows parted and Yamanatz, accompanied by a white man, whom Jack recognized as old Joe Riggs, entered the camp. To Jack's greeting of "How?" the newcomers both made response. Joe inquired as to the condition of Jack's feet, and upon being assured that those necessary adjuncts to a man's safety on Rock Creek were in fairly good order, the cattleman suggested the opportunity presented for Jack to make an attempt to connect with civilization.

Old Joe Riggs was known from the Cache le Poudre to the Rio Grande; to cowman, miner, prospector and goods store folks. Old Joe was a part and parcel of the main range. Forty-niners had bunked with him and fifty-niners had divided buffalo steaks with him, while sixty-niners from Missouri allowed old Joe could rock a cradle or shovel tailings from the sluice boxes, and seventy-niners found him as ready to take his turn at the drill or windlass as the best of them. In appearance old Joe was a weird, uncanny being that

made the creeps run up and down one's crupper bone. Seated upon a chair in a room full of average-sized people, Joe appeared a dwarf. His anatomy seemed to rest on the ends of his shoulder blades, while his knees formed the hypotenuse of an inverted right-angle triangle. When standing he overtopped every man in a regiment of six-footers. His arms swung listlessly to his knees from the shoulder socket, as if lacking in elbow joints, terminating in hands fashioned more after the talons of an eagle than those of a human being. His nose was also like the beak of that fierce bird, while his chin retreated from his underlip in a direct line to the "Adam's apple." High cheek bones and protruding forehead caused the deep sunken orbital spaces to appear sightless, except for the nervous batting of his eyelids. His shoulders were broad, but being thin chested, he was short on lung capacity, which caused a most extraordinary mixture of guttural whispers and shrill wheezes every time he tried to talk. His strength was prodigious, and on more than one occasion he had won his drink by taking hold of the chimes of a full barrel of liquor, raising it from the ground to his lips and drinking his fill from the bung-hole. The most startling of all, though, was his wardrobe, and it was an open secret that Joe had his surname thrust upon him by reason of the various rigs in which he was clad. As the winter season ap-

proached and Joe got cold, he would appropriate any and all old garments he could find lying around loose; old pants, overalls, shirts, vests and socks which others had cast away as useless. These he would patch and sew together where necessity demanded, lengthening or widening, and pull one garment on over another. In this semi-annual outfitting he would appear one day with overalls reaching just below the knees, the pair under them revealing their "frazzled" ornamentations for a foot or more. The next day, as like as not, he would find an old pair of red drawers, and these would go on right over the last pair of overalls. When the spring came and warm weather got the best of his clothes, Joe proceeded to divest himself of a lot of useless and uncomfortable rags, for by that time they could not be called garments.

Joe at the present time was conducting a vest-pocket ranch on the sunny slopes of the cedar-treed hills rising from the Grand River tributaries and in what were termed "warm holes," being little areas of sage-brush covered mesas found upon the banks of the streams. These miniature parks were quite fertile in bunch and even buffalo grass, and varied from five acres to a whole section in extent. His herd of cattle consisted of two heifers, six old cows and ten three-year-old steers. This constituted the nucleus of an expectant million-dollar stock farm. It represented

more than the average fortune accumulated by constant and attentive prospecting for forty years.

Joe's hint at the opportunity of connecting with God's country struck Jack as a coincidence upon which there might turn a contingency, so he reasoned with himself: "Why does Joe think I might want to get away from the Indians? Does he think I will desert my camp outfit and provisions? Besides, what is the old trapper to do when he returns?"

These questions were immediately answered by the cattleman just the same as though Jack had asked the information point blank, a proceeding which added to the weirdness of Joe's presence, and the most uncanny feature of it was the total inability of the hearer to locate whence came the sound that emanated from that sepulchral living cadaver. No lips moved in unison with a voice, nor even did the gleaming teeth, just visible through the parted mouth, open or close as if responsive to any oral exertions. The sound came from everywhere. Joe was a heaven-born ventriloquist.

"Yer needn't be slow about gittin' away from Rock Creek ef yer want ter go. 'Taint nothin' ter me. That ther' trapper ain't comin' back 'til ther beaver gets to usin' thar cutters on the trees a-buildin' dams, an' then he won't cum back ef thar's goin' to be trubble. He tol' me that ther day afore he struck out, savvey?"

Jack did not need to have the cabin fall on him nor

an upheaval of the earth to realize that the trapper had "cut loose" from the Rock Creek possibilities. There was an ominous silence for a couple of minutes. One thing was certain in the minds of the two white men, alone, as they were, far from aid of any sort in the event of an uprising, and the thought uppermost in both their minds was as patent to each other as if branded in letters of fire—the trapper had deserted the tenderfoot.

As soon as this thought had coursed through Jack's brain other thoughts surged one upon another in quick succession. Was it a frontier conspiracy in which both white and red men were equally interested? Was it a put-up job between the trapper and Joe and the Indians—merely a coincidence in the commission of the trade? Perhaps the trapper had sold the camp outfit and Joe had come to take possession. This last thought made his heart sick, for he knew only too well that he could make no resistance except that which would end in a tragedy. Again the supernatural mind-reading Joe proclaimed himself in a few disjointed sentences, but to Jack they were most welcome in their honesty of purpose and implication of the trapper as a coward.

"I reckon yer might be calkerlatin' on what yer would do with this yere plunder," said Joe, as he pointed at the camp outfit, the provisions and the furs

hanging on the side of the cabin. Continuing in that monotonous sing-song of gutturals and whispers, he allowed the plunder belonged to Jack, for the trapper had acknowledged as much.

“That trapper got ‘skeered’ of Colorow and lit out. Mebbe yer don’t know it, but the Utes don’t like him any too much, and when Colorow said ‘Vamoose’ yer pardner left yer to yer own cogitashuns. He tol’ me that nothin’ in the camp belonged to him; thet ’twas all your’n except the traps and harness. ’Taint likely he’ll come back ’til next March, so ef yer don’t want ter stay ’til then yer’ll have to git a move on yerself. Thet trail won’t stay open an hour on the high divide, but yer can rastle a couple Ute cayuses through ten feet of snow like a hot bullet goin’ through a piece of ham fat, and onct on the other side of the divide it will be an easy trail to Kremling’s, at the mouth of the Big Muddy. Yer don’t need ter take much along. Yer will be out but one night, and mebbe yer will git ter the old hunter’s cabin about forty mile from here ’fore that. Ef yer don’t ther is a good campin’ ground on the crik in a big pocket five miles this side.”

It did not take long to make a trade. Jack reserved his six-shooters, blankets and three or four fine cat and fox skins. Joe gave him a good Indian pony, a silver watch, and the balance in money for the provisions, rifle, ammunition and other paraphernalia, ex-

cept the remaining furs, traps and cooking utensils, which were the legitimate belongings of the trapper.

But the awful perils of a trip over an unknown trail in midwinter rose up as a barrier between Jack and civilization. The night had come on and Yamanatz, with Chiquita, as silent witnesses to the exchange of chattels, sat beside the camp fire. Grotesque shadows wavered and wandered back and forth in and out of the gloom as Jack replenished the disappearing embers with new fuel preparatory to a pow-wow in which the final arrangements were to be completed concerning his escape from Rock Creek, his return later when the winter passed, when Yamanatz should conduct him to the great gold deposit. It was a matter of a hundred miles to the nearest ranch in Middle Park, before reaching which was a "divide," the top of which soared far above the surrounding hills, and then came the Gore, or Park range, split by the Grand River into an impassable cañon, along whose steep side ran the old Ute trail, up, up, until it crossed the snow-covered summit beyond timber line, and thence descended by serpentine and circuitous windings to the southern entrance of the Park. From there to the ranch on the Troublesome was open level country, across which was comparatively easy traveling. The other pass over the Gore range, which was used by the trapper and Jack when they made their incoming

trip to Rock Creek, was already closed by snow as far as travel by horses was concerned, and for that matter the Ute trail was closed, except for being opened by the band of Indians and thirty or forty ponies bucking their way through to Sulphur Springs.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAMP IN THE WILLOWS.

The most difficult portions of the journey would be encountered the first day over the numerous ridges of barren waste intervening between Rock Creek and the high divide. Old Joe shook his head in uncertain manner when Jack asserted his confidence in being able to follow after Colorow. Yamanatz nodded in assent at the dangers confronted by the dilemma of Jack's unfamiliarity with the trail, and then in that portentous monosyllabic manner of Indians in brief words conveying whole paragraphs of information but adding to the dismal forebodings, said:

“White man all right. Plenty sign when trail in big woods. Heap sign on big trees. Come big open, no trees, no sign; one look, two look, three look, all same. All snow, no trail, no tree. Get lost; sundown, no fire, no camp. White man cold. Pretty soon sleep; fall off pony; sleep long time.”

Then Jack knew that “three looks” would carry him from the top of one high hill to the top of another, as far as the eye could reach to the horizon, into a

country absolutely treeless, and where even an Indian would be lost if he had never been shown the trail. To attempt the trip alone would be sheer madness and only result in that subtle overpowering sleep into eternity—death by freezing.

Yamanatz stopped speaking for a moment to give his hearers ample time to fully understand him, then continued: "White man sabe? Colorow gone one sleep, mebbe so not make 'em Gore range. White man catch 'em pony tomorrow. Two sleeps before can take 'em trail to follow Colorow, sabe? Colorow mebbe so come back meet 'em white man. Colorow then heap mad, no get 'em flour, bacon. Colorow, Antelope, Bennett all heap hungry. White man no got 'em big gun; little gun not much good, mebbe so?" and Yamanatz lapsed into silence.

There was no need to ask anything more. The cunning old warrior knew only too well the fate that awaited Jack if Colorow and his ugly renegade Indians should fail to get through to Sulphur Springs and had to return empty handed to Rock Creek. Old Joe knew, too, that his own safety would be problematical, even with his years of familiarity with the whole Ute tribe. The gloom that settled over them was full of foreboding. Each one was striving to hatch out a plan that would dispel the dangers now besetting Jack's safety.

It was useless to think of old Joe attempting the trip with Jack, and Yamanatz made no sign of being willing to assume the role of guide. At last as Jack was about to abandon all hope, Chiquita arose and, crossing over to where Jack was, bid him to be of good cheer.

Pointing to the stars, she said: "What Yamanatz has said is in the sky. The Great Spirit who watches over the Indian maiden has told Chiquita to lead the white man that he may go to meet his white brothers. Chiquita knows the trail. Chiquita is not afraid. It is but one moon since Chiquita's pony did paw the deep snow and carry Chiquita on the big divide to meet the Ute braves coming from the Grand River. One sleep, and the white man Jack must get his ponies, and two sleeps before the sun shall show on top of the high mountain. Chiquita will be ready at the tepee of Yamanatz to lead the white man over big divide, where make 'em one camp for Chiquita and one camp for white man Jack. One sleep and Chiquita say adios to white man, then come back Indian village on same day. White man go to his white brothers on Troublesome, then go long way Denver City."

Here was a dilemma that confronted Jack, even more embarrassing than anything yet thrown in his path—the would-be leader of the select four hundred at White River acting as guide over a wild country, to

say nothing of a one-night camp among the willows at the edge of some little creek. It must have amused him to a great degree, for, serious as it was, a smile lurked around the corners of his mouth, causing Chiquita to become a little disdainful, as an Indian is very sensitive to ridicule, but Jack quickly relinquished the comical side of the question and his features again became as grave as those of old Yamanatz. Old Joe was the first to speak:

"The Injun gal is made of the right stuff and will pilot yer to ther right place, an' she can take care of herself goin' an' comin'. I've seen her throw that knife in her belt twenty feet as straight as yer can shoot a bullet outen that six-shooter of your'n."

Then the old Ute spoke:

"Chiquita all same Yamanatz show 'em trail to white man. White man sabe?"

Jack could do nothing but take Chiquita's hands in his own and bow his humblest thanks. It occurred to him he had an old sealskin cap in his war bag and that it might please the dusky maiden. He soon produced it and, with another friendly greeting, presented it to her. It was lined with bright red silk, and she proceeded to put it on with the silk on the outside, to which Jack made no remonstrance. Although it made him bite his tongue, he did not "crack a smile."

Yamanatz and Chiquita immediately started on the

trail for the Indian village. It was ten o'clock. After a chat with Joe they both turned into the bunk, Jack to dream of home, sheets and pillowcases, barber shops, chinaware and a real live dining-room table. It took all next day and far into the night to get his Ute ponies in readiness for Tuesday's long journey, but at last the packs were made up. Three days' supply for two, of bread, bacon, tea and coffee, were made into a convenient bundle, to be rolled into the blankets, which would in turn be strapped behind Jack's saddle. All the other paraphernalia—Indian moccasins, buckskin shirts, beaded tobacco bags and a real Ute war bonnet, with lots of pipes, elk teeth, bears' claws, arrow heads and Jack's clothing—were packed in rubber blankets, canvas covers and grain bags, ready for the pack-saddle on the other pony.

It was just daybreak when Jack bid the old Rock Creek camp farewell, leaving it to be put in shape by old Joe, who had helped the young man from the far east in his preparations. Old Joe did not waste words in his good-bye speech, but there was at least a perceptible tremor in his voice and a decided reluctance in withdrawing his hand after the adios shake. The Indian village was reached at exactly sunrise, and as a chorus of yelping dogs greeted the arrival of the ponies, a few squaws poked their heads out of the tepees, nodding a salute of recognition to Jack. Chi-

quita was ready to mount her pony as soon as Jack gave her the word. He had tightened the diamond hitch on the pack pony and his own saddle girth preparatory for a long lope over the sage-brush flat that extended from the Indian village across the small mesa at the foot of the first hills, which form the steps of the high divide. Chiquita, dressed in her buckskin shirt, skirt, leggings and moccasins heavily trimmed with beads, quickly sprang into her saddle and pulled the blanket up around her shoulders Indian fashion. Her hair hung in heavy braids at either side of her cheeks, while the sealskin cap with showy red silk lining crowned her head. Into the peak of the cap she had thrust an immense eagle feather. The chorus of yelping dogs again took part in the ceremony attending their departure. As they ascended the first bench several blacktail deer ran directly across their path—beautiful animals that cleared the sage brush in graceful, easy bounds, looking first to the right and then to the left, as much as to say, "Come on, I'm ready."

It was noon when the last long snow-covered ridge lay behind them. For two hours it had been a battle with snowdrift after snowdrift. The trail cut by the Colorow Indian ponies had been filled by the wind with drifting snow until not a sign was left. Parapets of snow ten feet high were encountered, which had to

be cut and the trail again located by Chiquita. First one pony would take the lead and, reared on his hind feet, paw the snow down beneath him, while the next in line trampled it a second time, until a cut was formed at a low point in that endless chain of banks stretching for miles in either direction. Towering forty feet in the air were mountains of the same dazzling white, which had to be circled, sometimes leaving the trail to the right or left for a mile. At times these detours were made only to be retraced because of the impassable blockades rising in sheer precipices, and once the trail opened by these detours was found to be refilled within an hour, so fierce was that icy blast, blowing its wanton breath in seeming malice against the weary beasts and their equally weary riders.

Jack had tramped snow for the ponies on many occasions when they refused to move. Chiquita had lent her encouragement time and again as Jack seemed ready to abandon the trip, but at last behind them towered the top of the big divide, on whose crest ran a snow bank higher than any before encountered. Giving a few moments' rest to the panting ponies, Jack took the lead, for now the trail was easily discernible and followed without a break, down, down, over and through a few more banks of that mealy substance, affording neither footing nor shelter for man or

beast, until the warm forests of pine once more protected them from the frightful cold.

At the first convenient spot Jack cleared away the snow from a huge rock and soon had a cheerful fire roaring, which furnished warmth to their numbed bodies; then from his tin cup in which snow was melted he brewed a refreshing draught of tea, which, with a bite of frozen bread thawed out on the hot rock, appeased their hunger for the time being. By the aid of a pocket thermometer Jack ascertained the temperature to be 36 degrees below zero. The sky was clear, but even at the edge of the timber a thousand feet below that terrible snow-turreted ridge the wind screamed in its fury and pierced the heavy garments and blankets within which Chiquita and Jack were encased. The ponies humped their backs at the lee side of the fire and seemed grateful for a few mouthful of smoke in lieu of a wisp of dry buffalo grass. Conversation was almost impossible, as words were not audible three feet distant. Both were too numb to talk, and it was difficult even to eat. The half hour at an end, Jack struck into the trail, leading his pony. Chiquita had not dismounted since leaving the Indian village, and was getting pretty stiff with cold. At the end of another half hour she managed to make Jack hear her, and after considerable trouble he found a log by the side of the trail, where she could stand and

swing first one leg and then the other to restore circulation. After ten minutes' vigorous exercise she remounted, and the little procession again started through the down timber.

They had reached a portion of heavy forest that had been ravaged by timber fires. Miles and miles of immense trees lay in chaotic confusion. Tall spires of limbless bark-burned pines stretched eighty, one hundred and even a hundred and fifty feet skyward, the weather-beaten trunks white with the storm-scouring of years. Through this desolate stretch of ghostyard (a veritable birthplace for spooks and goblins, the terror of that docile animal known as the Rocky Mountain canary, but usually called a jackass) the party moved in silent Indian trot, each step taking them nearer and nearer the warmer region of cedar, piñon and sage brush, through groves of quaking asps, whose leaves in the summer time never cease their eternal and restless quiver and upon whose smooth trunks were Indian signs galore. On the larger and older trees could be found those subtle knifecuts, conveying intelligence through representations of chickens, horses, snakes, hatchets, knives, guns, arrows and other characters which in the past had warned of the approaching enemy or told of the chase, of the success or the defeat not only of Utes, but of Sioux, Apaches, Arapahoes and Kiowas. Many an hour had

Jack spent in studying these trees which are scattered over the Rocky Mountain region, bearing whole histories, trees generally found within an altitude of 6,000 to 8,000 feet above sea level.

It was not long after passing through this belt that they came to the south hillsides, whose slopes were free from snow and where the runways for deer, elk and mountain sheep became more and more numerous. Stocky little cedar trees stretched forth their long arms over the trail, sending forth fragrance of lead-pencils and giving a slap on the face if the rider neglected to duck in season to avoid the branch. Entering a sage-brush covered mesa, immense jack-rabbits bounded hither and thither, sage hens flew up with a whirl of their wings and the shrill scream of an eagle greeted their ears as if to warn them against entering his domain. As the trail led them nearer and nearer to the banks of a good sized creek the ponies became restive, and finally the pack animal resorted to that well-known method of suggesting that it was time to make camp by "bucking"—not a stop in the bucking process until blankets, bags and bundles were scattered for a mile over the sage-brush flat. It was an hour's work for both Jack and Chiquita to get the plunder together and again pack it on the refractory cayuse, and it was all the more aggravating, as it was only a couple of miles from the spot selected for camp.

Arriving at a bend in the creek—rather it was a fair sized river—they proceeded to make the best of everything at their command. There was a space along the edge of the river about two hundred feet wide, covered here and there with wild rye, at the roots of which was dried buffalo grass. This strip of land ran back to a cañon wall, a precipice some forty feet high, sheer and without foothold for even a wildcat. Thick willows grew along the base of this wall, and it was but a few minutes after the ponies were relieved of their saddles ere Jack had selected two favorable spots which would afford reasonably good beds, one for Chiquita and one for himself. Cutting away the willows up to the wall in a narrow space just big enough for one to lie down, and forming a mattress of others occupied but a little time. Meanwhile, Chiquita had brought driftwood and dry sticks until an immense pile of fuel was in readiness for the long night. The ponies were picketed, one on each side of the camp and the third one close to the edge of the stream, forming a guard past which no wild animal would attempt to go. It was now dark and the ponies were foraging for buffalo grass, while Jack toasted some bacon on a stick, made coffee in an old baked-bean can, which he had thoughtfully tied to the pack-saddle, and toasted the frozen bread on a hot rock. During the early dusk the mew of a plaintive

camp bird gave notice that that mountain sentinel was at hand, and the handsome gray-coated camp follower would spread his black-tipped wings and fly down to the edge of the fire, looking for crumbs and refuse of the "kitchen." Chiquita gave him a few morsels, but there was little to spare from the stock at hand.

After they had satisfied their hunger Jack and Chiquita settled themselves for a long talk. It was the first opportunity that had been presented since old Joe and Yamanatz interrupted them the Sunday before after the six-course banquet Jack had given his eastern friends by proxy.

The ponies tugged at their picket ropes, wandering around in search of overlooked patches of grass. Occasionally a wolf howl mournfully awakened the stillness of the gathering darkness, to be answered by others of the same species, each animal in the common quest of something to eat, and all probably attracted by the camp fire and its attendant odors.

A first-quarter moon shed its cold, silvery light on the drama at the base of the precipitous rock. The air was crisp and still. The splashing stream dashing its burden along the confines of its narrow channel to the Pacific Ocean was the orchestra, keeping in touch with the scene, staged by no artificial hand and curtained by the star-spangled canopy of night. The camp fire sent showers of sparks far aloft and its warmth un-

loosened the tense-drawn muscles, every one of which had been called upon to its utmost capacity in the battles that the weary travelers had encountered with the snowdrifts. Jack lay stretched upon the sand by the fire, while Chiquita stood beside him. They had recounted the perils of the day and had outlined their respective trips for the morrow—she to face again the dangers of the divide and go back to the uneducated, primitive life of the forest man, degraded by the deceits and intrigues of the avaricious, land-grabbing representatives of schools, colleges and institutions, proclaiming the law to be justice, he to face the vicissitudes of an unknown trail, the possibility of meeting a murderous band of these forest men while on his way back to that realm of advanced civilization, educated to the highest degree of refinement of “doing” others legally.

Both had remained silent for a long time after the exchanges of the day’s experiences. Jack wanted to express his gratitude to Chiquita for her bravery and self-imposed task in conducting him over the trail, for he now fully realized the certain death that awaited him had he undertaken the trip alone. But he was not master of words that the Indian maiden would understand in their fullest import, nor did he hope to be able to convey by signs that which was uppermost in his mind.

It may be Chiquita read his thoughts, but was equally at loss to find adequate words to impart any assistance. Finally, after many misgivings as to what she might consider an ample word reward, he started in at random:

"Chiquita sabe that she has been good to Jack?"

"Me no sabe, Señor."

Jack was nonplussed. In her he found the same ability to dissemble that predominated in the well-known character of the first lady in the Garden of Eden. He tried to recall some Spanish words that she might understand, but none of the few which he essayed to use met with any better reception.

"Chiquita heap brave," said Jack, to which she made no reply.

"Chiquita save Jack; make 'em glad Jack's heart. What Jack do to make Chiquita's heart glad?"

He at last had struck the right chord, as her face beamed with a glad response, but it brought questions causing a train of thought which made him smile even at the risk of incurring her displeasure. To express gratitude to an Indian requires much more diplomacy and skill than is required under like circumstances in civilized communities.

"Would the fair-faced sister of the white man save Jack all same Chiquita? Would the pale-face maiden bring firewood and sleep in willow bed to save white man's life?"

Her eyes blazed in the consciousness of knowing that in the present age on the American Continent no white woman had ever been put to a like test. Whether she felt this intuitively or whether she had learned it from the squaws who had visited the big cities as they recounted the adoration extended by the male to the weaker sex as a part and parcel of civilization, it matters not.

Jack knew that he was at as great a disadvantage in her presence as if at the mercy of the divinest coquette in all of God's country. He essayed to answer, but something restrained him. It was not fear; it was not because he had his own misgivings on the subject, nor was it because he had no ready reply. Nevertheless, he waited and in his mind he tried to picture one of the belles of society bucking snow to save some football graduate from death, or one sleeping in the open air, without a chaperon, and a man in the same cañon. What *would* Mrs. Grundy say? Of course he thought of the story by an eminent author where there was a scuttled ship laden with gold, a clergyman and a rich man's daughter cast upon an unknown island, and Jack acknowledged he had never heard of Mrs. Grundy making unkind remarks about that tale. But that was the result of accident, and mortuary tables classify accidental risks in a category by themselves.

Chiquita had suggested the society belle who would voluntarily give up half her estate for a real live, accidental romance that did not incur too much danger. Would she leave her maid and steam radiator and in the midst of a western blizzard sally forth to carry coal up three flights of stairs to a poor, benighted student, and then sleep on the doormat, for any reward there might be in store for her, either from a consciousness of having performed a creditable act or because she loved him?

Of course, Jack knew there was no occasion ever presented where a loving young thing, just out of the sixth grade, had been called upon to carry anything any more formidable than a bunch of roses to a sick friend, and the modern equipages splashed only a little dirty water over roads well kept from snowdrifts by indulgent taxpayers. Still, the question had been asked, and he manfully determined to stand up for the fair ones across the range.

“ Si, Señorita Chiquita, the Indian maiden has said it. The pale-faced sisters of Jack would save their white brothers—even their red brothers and their black brothers. The fair sisters of the white man brave death in many ways for their white brothers. See, Chiquita, the medicine tepee of the white man is great as the high rock. It has many beds, more than the number of all Yamanatz’s ponies. The young man

who makes the gun, the maiden who makes the pretty cap mebbe so breaks the leg. Mebbe so the big steam cars come together all in big smash—kill many, heap hurt all. Then taken 'em to white man's medicine tepee. Medicine man tie up head, arms, legs, and white maiden in medicine clothes, all clean dress, white cap, red cross on the arm, give sick man medicine, wash sick man's hands, feet; give little something to eat, sit beside 'em, feel of hot head; stay all day, stay all night; watch 'em little blood knocks on the wrist, count all same on little watch. Mebbe so one get well, go way, good-bye. Mebbe so some die, go way too. Some more come bad hurt. Mebbe so like mountain fever; mebbe so heap sick inside. Big medicine man takes little knife, cut 'em all open, so. Cut out big chunk, mebbe so little chunk, all same; sew 'em up again, so, sabe? White maiden stand by, help big medicine man. 'Nother medicine man stand by give 'em heap strong stuff on cloth, sabe? Sick man all same breathe 'em in, byme by go sleep; no feel 'em knife. Big medicine man heap cut. Sick man no feel all same. Byme by wake up. Heap sick now long time; mebbe get all well; mebbe so one moon, mebbe so two moons; mebbe so die. All same pale face maiden heap brave; save many white man like Jack."

Chiquita never took her eyes from Jack's counte-

nance. That she fully understood every phase of the hospital life as portrayed by him was evident from the dilated nostril, the wide-open eyes and the tumultuous heaving of the bosom through the heavy folds of her buckskin. She waited a full two minutes after Jack had finished, and then in a voice just above a whisper asked: "Will the white man Jack take Chiquita to see the medicine tepee of the white people that she may see the fair white sister in her medicine clothes?"

Jack little realized that he had touched the one chord in Chiquita's character that she yearned to follow. The imaginings of her young life had met with no sympathetic response. She revolted at the cruelty often displayed by the warriors in the Indian village, and the atrocities committed on captives while she was but a child were hideous recollections.

Jack quickly replied: "When Jack comes back to go with Yamanatz to Blazing-Eye-by-Big-Water then Chiquita will see big medicine tepee in Denver City and the fair sister in her medicine clothes."

"Will Jack come back Rock Creek when beaver cut 'em big tree?" asked the Indian girl.

Jack figured that April would be early enough, and even that would require him to use snowshoes a great part of the distance. The Berthoud pass would not be open until June, and he doubted if the snow would be

passable for ponies on the high divide they had just crossed, but the Gore range could be crossed farther north and obviate the high ridge and its deep snow.

"Jack will come back the first new moon after beaver begin cut. Will Chiquita be in tepee near Pony Creek or White River?" He both answered one question and asked another.

"Me no sabe where Chiquita then," she replied, in a rather sorrowful tone, continuing: "Mebbe so all go to agency, mebbe so stay on Pony Creek. White man no find Chiquita on Pony Creek, go all same agency find 'em Yamanatz. Where Yamanatz there Chiquita wait for white man Jack."

That being settled, Jack took the blankets and distributed them on the willow beds. He then replenished the fire with some half-green logs pulled from a pile of drift wood, examined the picket ropes of the ponies and lit his pipe for another smoke. Chiquita wrapped herself in her blanket, tucked herself into a big wild-cat-skin bag, which made a part of her bed on the willow branches, and was soon asleep.

Through the rings of smoke which curled from his pipe Jack sensed the future, as a spiritualist would say, and, realizing that this would in all probability be his last night of outdoor life for some time to come, he was loath to close his eyes in sleep, shutting out the grand retrospect of independence which a few

months' experience on the frontier had taught him—a life absolutely free from conventionalities, police interference and taxes.

“No wonder,” he soliloquized, “that the red man prefers the avenues of the forest, the virgin plains of grass, the rugged cañons running with sparkling water, the smoke of his tepee fire and a starry dome for his homestead, to the cobblestones, the plowed ground, the artificial goose ponds, the greasy-surfaced rivers, the steam-heated, foul-smelling hothoused monuments of man's industry and civilization.”

The ponies snorted as though an intruder was lurking on the outskirts of the camp. Jack kicked one of the smoldering logs and a shower of sparks were borne upward into the dark night air. A few moments later and the prowler's deep, dismal howl wafted along the river course, supplemented by the short, snappy yelps of half a dozen coyotes. The interruption was ended and the man of the house again lapsed into speculation.

“Who would believe that Jack Sheppard would be here alone with that Indian girl in the middle of January, over a thousand miles from his home, where are velvet carpets and feather beds for old folks, eider-down quilts for his sisters and probably a good hair mattress and blankets for the butler?”

Knocking the ashes from his pipe and placing that

article of luxury safely in an Indian-beaded buckskin tobacco pouch, he drew one foot up and clasped his hands over the greasy overalled knee, resting his back against one of the log "divans" which go to make up every camp, even be they temporary ones. He had divested himself of his outer coat and relied upon the heavy buckskin shirt and the camp fire for protection from the cold. Long strings, demanded by frontier fashion, dangled idly from the sleeves and -yoke of the garment. As he silently contemplated his wardrobe he gave an additional sigh and wondered, almost aloud:

"I suppose these will have to give way to a 'biled' shirt, tailor-made clothes and white collar, to say nothing of getting a haircut regularly."

This last "think" made Jack unclasp his hands rather hastily, but having assured himself that his hair was still intact, he gave vent to more soliloquy.

"If I were to walk into that Sunday-school class of mine, of ten-year-olds, in this rig, I wonder if the shorter catechism would stand any show?"

With a smile he proceeded to throw on a couple more logs, refresh himself with a drink of water and, having divested himself of his boots, using a saddle and coat for a pillow, he pulled the blankets around himself and was soon fast asleep.

He was awakened by snorts of all three ponies. The



THE CAMP IN THE WILLOWS.

fire had burned out with the exception of a bed of coals glowing in the deep black night. The "watch-dogs" of the camp had crowded up to the lengths of their picket ropes, getting as near each other as they could. Jack slowly raised himself to a sitting position and listened attentively. Peering out through the willows he could see, by the restive tugging of the ponies at their fastenings with the pricking of their ears toward the high precipice, that the cause for alarm did not come from inside the cañon. Cautiously putting on a pair of moccasins, which he always had near him at night, he picked up his .44 and was on the point of stepping into the open by the fire, when from above came a screech, a long cat-like growl of defiance, yet defeat, that made the cañon echo and re-echo with maniacal vocal debauchery. Jack's heart, it is needless to say, quit doing business peremptorily for at least thirty seconds. His eyes followed the ear-vanes on the ponies' heads, and just at the edge of that breastwork of rock could be seen two golden discs as big as car wheels, Jack thought. A greenish glare as of a halo surrounded the yellow spots, and occasionally the bright spots suddenly disappeared only to shine forth again appallingly bright. It was a mountain lion taking snap shots while it speculated on its appetite. Jack stepped out and gave the end of a burned log a kick into the hot coals. Millions of

sparks flew up. The big lemon-colored orbs slunk back out of sight and ten minutes later the faint repetition of the first number proclaimed the concert ended.

The "big dipper" pointed to 3 o'clock. Throwing on some more fuel the fire blazed high. Chiquita thrust her head out of the environments of the fur bag and sat up in the willow retreat. "Me want 'em drink; mouth heap dry," was the laconic remark she made to Jack as he acknowledged her wakefulness. Giving her a cup of water, he referred to the visitor just departed, to which she scornfully replied:

"Heap big coward, big cat with long tail. Little cat with short tail all same like this bag, no coward. Big cat all same you call 'em lion, no catch 'em ponies, Indian or white man, all time afraid. Big cat catch 'em rabbit, lame deer. Mebbe' so heap hungry tackle 'em big elk; drop from big tree on elk back. Big cat, little cat, wolf, bear, no come near camp fire. Look at camp fire long way off. Chiquita no fraid when all 'lone."

With this piece of information, with which Jack was already acquainted, they both resumed their interest in the land of Nod.

The bright winter sun had not mounted far enough in the heavens to shed any warm rays into the camp when Jack pulled on his boots and poked the fire preparatory to an early breakfast. The ponies did not

look as if dyspepsia troubled them, nor did Jack feel overburdened with belly worship. The little larder was a hollow mockery to the knockings of a ravenous appetite. Jack concluded that a well-fed discretion was better than hungry haste, so he meandered down the river in search of a rabbit, while Chiquita attended to her morning ablutions. About the time that the average city girl would have consumed with curling tongs, cashmere bouquet and in getting her hat on straight, Jack returned with a nice fat "jack" of the *lepus cuniculus* family, all ready for the coals. It did not take long to cook the choice cuts from the delectable portions of "Bunny." The seasoning was rather crude, consisting of powder taken from a misfire cartridge, which Jack happened to have in his belt. But "saltpeter in gunpowder is better than no salt at all" is an old axiom among hunters. This addition to the "hollow mockery" larder sent their spirits up to the top of the goodfellowship thermometer.

"A burned hare is worth two in the bush," said Jack, as he irreverently twisted a trite quotation and rabbit leg. But Chiquita kept right on in her argument with a section of the vertebra just roasted on a forked stick.

After the first pangs of hunger had been somewhat appeased the Indian girl said to Jack, "What you call 'em little things use all same knife when eat off tin plate?"

Jack recalled the fact of some cheap silver-plated forks that made up the camp kit.

"Forks," he replied, adding, as Chiquita seemed to want further information, "The fair sisters of Jack no eat 'em venison with fingers, all same Chiquita. Think 'em Chiquita wild girl. When Jack come back bring 'em forks and spoons for Chiquita."

To this she seemed satisfied, but remarked: "Mebbe so fingers pale face girl good play 'em tom-tom, make 'em beadwork, wash 'em tin plates. No good catch 'em pony, cut 'em firewood, make 'em buckskin."

With this she scornfully turned her lip up in a manner that made Jack laugh outright, a proceeding that always made Chiquita's eyes snap with dangerous fire. He quieted her by pointing at the sun as an indication that it was time to say adios. The ponies were brought up and quickly saddled, Jack's belongings packed in the most approved fashion to stand another hard climb over the Gore range, and Chiquita's restive "Bonito" carefully cinched for the return trip to the Indian village. The last point of the "diamond hitch" had been made and the rope drawn taut; the last knot had been tied over the roll of blankets behind Jack's saddle, and the last of the morning's banquet had been divided between the wayfarers, whose journeys would in a few moments lead in opposite directions. As Chiquita arranged herself on the back of "Bonito" she looked wistfully at the sky and surrounding peaks.

"Me make 'em Yamanatz tepee sun here," pointing halfway down the horizon to the west.

Jack signified his expectations by remarking, rather dubiously, "Me mebbe so get to Troublesome heap dark."

Following the direction of Chiquita's finger as she pointed to the high divide where the previous day they had battled long in the deep snow, Jack felt some misgivings as to the Indian girl being able to ride the big drift down. But the confidence she enjoyed in her own ability to stand hardship and the additional reliance she placed in the thoroughbred Ute pony was summed up in her one decisive comment, uttered almost imperiously, at least scornfully:

"Bonito take Chiquita through deep snow like big fish go through foaming water. Wind all gone up there now."

Jack threw himself into his saddle and reined up beside the future medicine queen of the White River Utes. She drew from her bosom a beaded buckskin bag, from which she took a pair of beaver's jaws, the short teeth bound with otter and a long strip of mountain-lion fur bound firmly around a braid of her own hair. She handed them to Jack, saying in a low, almost beseeching tone: "Will the white man Jack bring em back Chiquita's medicine teeth when the beaver cuts the trees?"

It was a great sacrifice to part with the "medicine," to which all Indians pin their faith. Otter and mountain-lion fur especially is woven into the long straight braids of both buck and squaw to drive away evil spirits, and Chiquita evidently had been to a good deal of trouble to obtain the prescription from the head medicine man for her own use. The beaver teeth were symbolic of the time when Chiquita expected Jack to keep faith with her. His reply was made while the palms of both hands were stretched toward her, the fingers pointing up.

"Jack will come," then pressing his knees against the sides of his pony, he leaned over and, after a quick hand grasp, bid adios to the smiling daughter of Yamanatz.

An hour later he had reached the end of his first "look." Scanning the side of the high divide he could see "Bonito" lunging forward into the deep drifts skirting the top of the divide. Presently the pony stopped and turned broadside toward him. Looking intently he saw Chiquita wave a farewell response by means of a small silk flag handkerchief which he had given her upon the first visit to Rock Creek. Signaling a return salute by means of his sombrero, he waited until "Bonito" disappeared into that fortress of snow, knowing that once over the crest ten minutes would be sufficient time to make the crossing in safety.

As she did not reappear, Jack struck boldly into the trail, which now led him by easy stages up toward timber line, the dark rushing waters of the Grand River hissing and seething far below him. At the entrance to the cañon, where the warmer current of air met the colder wave from the snow-covered mountain-side, huge bristling bayonets of frosted rye grass waved their menacing blades at intruders. Lattice-worked ramparts of ice and snow were veiled with filmy curtains bespangled with millions of scintillating diamonds, the congealed breathings from that steaming throat, through which ceaselessly poured the mountain torrent in its strenuous effort to join the ocean.

Jack looked wistfully at the scene and sighed that a spectacle of such rare beauty could not be shared by his eastern friends.

The tortuous trail often led to the edge of a precipice, where the slightest misstep of his pony would have hurled both beast and rider into a frightful abyss. At other times the narrow pathway meandered serpentine fashion between pine trees so thickly interspersed that the pack would wedge first on one side and then the other, to the imminent destruction of Jack's belongings.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RANCH ON THE TROUBLESOME.

It was pitch dark when Jack rode into the corral at the ranch on the Troublesome. After unpacking and storing his trappings he went over to the ranch house. Several Ute ponies were in the corral. Their presence puzzled him, and as he entered the log house what was his surprise to find himself in the presence of Colorow, Bennett and Antelope. Old Tracy, the owner of the ranch, greeted the newcomer with a merry "How—how—well, beat my brains out with a straw ef I tho't of a-seeing you afore spring."

Bill, the fiery red-whiskered, red-haired, red-faced, stuttering Irishman, ejaculated, after a good deal of effort, "D—d—d—durn my p—p—p—pictures! "G—g—g—glad t—t—t—to see yer." The obese, low-browed renegade Colorow looked inquiringly. So did the other Indians as Jack replied to both ranchmen :

"I left Rock Creek yesterday morning and crossed

the Gore range today. The snow was pretty deep in spots."

Colorow's eyes glittered as it dawned on him that the white man Jack of Rock Creek and this man were one and the same. Jack did not know any of the trio except Bennett, neither of the others having openly visited the camp below. As Bennett rose up from the floor with a greeting he turned and waved his hand:

"This Antelope, this Colorow."

Jack involuntarily stepped back a pace, halfway starting his hand as if to grasp his six-shooter. Colorow saw the motion as well as the swift, penetrating flash that shot from Jack's gray eyes into the very soul of the old red devil. But the warrior never made a hostile movement. The least perceptible smile crept into his face as he interpreted the telegraphic glance. He realized that Jack guessed for a certainty what Bennett and Antelope might guess, for Colorow had never told any of the Utes that he actually followed Jack, nor that he waited in vain at the mouth of the long gulch for that worthy young man to walk to his death. It was with mock cordiality that the two men acknowledged each other's presence, but not so with Antelope, who rose and grasped Jack's outstretched hand. Antelope and Bennett *did* guess right. The ranchmen had seen the little exchange of "symptoms" and were at loss to understand the purport thereof,

Nevertheless, they had in an instant, yet seemingly in a careless manner, lessened the distance between the right hand and the butt end of their respective six-shooters, for the frontiersman is keen to scent danger. Colorow remained in his chair and thus addressed Jack:

“Sabe white man Rock Creek trail?”

Jack nodded in reply.

“Sabe camp where Utes sleep?”

Jack nodded again, holding up two fingers, signifying he had seen both camping places, as the Utes had not made as rapid progress as he.

“Colorow lose twelve ponies,” counting them by holding up both hands, then two additional fingers. “Mebbe so white man see ’em ponies?”

Jack shook his head. The ponies had become hungry, broken away and probably were hunting buffalo grass in the lower hills when he was crossing the higher slopes of the Gore range. A few questions as to the camp on Rock Creek, what disposition he had made of the camp property and furs, and then the Indians drew their blankets about themselves and silently filed away to the corral, where they mounted their ponies and set out for their own camp in the willows, some half mile distant. After they had departed Tracy said with a quizzical look:

“That old devil is up to mischief,” meaning Col-

orow. He turned to Jack, continuing, "Tho't mebbe so yer were goin' to plunk him fer a minnit thar."

Bill chimed in: "I seen the f—f—f—fire in yer eyes and says to myself, it's all over with Cu—cu—col—col—Colorow at last, b—b—b—but why in h—h—h—hellen d—d—d—didn't yer shoot?"

"Well," said Jack, just the least regretting he had not, "I didn't know how much of a 'stink' it would raise. The Utes are getting pretty bad, and the whole parcel of them might take a notion to come up here and clean out the Park before the soldiers could stop them."

"What d' yer mean?" anxiously asked both his listeners, with a perceptible blanching of their bronzed faces.

"Old Yamanatz tells me things aren't going just right at the agency. Colorow and Douglas' band of renegade Utes were camped outside the reservation, two miles from the cabin where the trapper and I put up. Didn't the trapper tell you anything?" suddenly asked Jack.

The ranchmen looked curiously at one another, and Tracy evasively remarked, "Well, he didn't say much; just said he got lonesome and had left the old woman without any wood an' allowed he'd cut some for her, then he'd go back byme-by."

"Yes, byme-by," scornfully broke in Jack, adding,

with some feeling, "Between me and the corral that trapper is afraid of the Utes and left me in the lurch."

Tracy and Bill exchanged glances, as much as to say, "The tenderfoot has got his eye-teeth cut all right." Bill spoke up as if a sudden impulse had made him forget the dangers that lurked in the Ute question.

"How about that redskin g—g—gal? Tho't meb-be so y—y—yer hed jined in holy wedlock into the Ute family," at which both the ranchmen slapped their hands together and laughed uproariously. Jack joined in with them, for he appreciated the gossip of ranch life, and no sewing bee ever furnished better "stamping ground" for wagging tongues than the frontier masculine brand.

Bill set about getting something to eat, and Jack had a double-barreled appetite stowed away under his belt. The table, with its marble oilcloth, real stone china plates, cups, saucers, glass vinegar cruets and a molasses jug, was soon loaded with a big platter of venison, a plate of hot biscuits, a pot of coffee, a pitcher of rich cream and a crock of yellow butter. It was nearly three months since Jack had put his legs under any kind of a table or seen anything the color of butter or cream, and it was a treat that could not have been equaled in Delmonico's to draw up to that feast with those truly honest brothers of wild civilization,

partake of their hospitality and listen to their straightforward talk, rich in its omission of studied rhetoric or ponderous grammatical phrases; no fear of using the wrong spoon or creating a social riot by helping one's self to a little venison gravy, even sopping the bread in the platter. Etiquette, frills and napkins had to give way to blunt speech, solid, wholesome food and a red bandanna. Back of it all, too, was his famous digestion and ravenous appetite, essential elements that have no co-existence with spike-tailed coats, trained gowns, "eye-openers" and "night caps." Jack had been busy, but he slowed down long enough to let out his belt one hole. Bill had entertained in the conversation direction.

"Say, yer know when yer shot the antelope and Irish Mike got sore at it because he missed the whole bunch? Well, old man Snyder come in with his team last October after a load of fish, and we got up the old raft and dropped the net into the bend of the river right there and dragged out over a thousand fine suckers at one haul. We threw back all under two pounds and a half."

Jack broke in with the remark, "Those red-finned suckers are most as good as trout."

"Yer bet yer life they are," chimed in Tracy.

"Well," continued Bill, "the old man and his boy was a watchin' us from the other bank, so we hed to

be sort o' careful as we picked them fish over, but there was five as pretty red-throated trout clum up my coat sleeve as ever yer laid eyes on; two of 'em tipped the scales at five pounds apiece. We had trout to eat fer a week. Gosh all humlock, but it was cold work gettin' them suckers ready. We worked 'til most midnight. They cleaned up about six hundred dollars on the load. Sold 'em in Georgetown, Central City, Idaho Springs—yes, sir, clean down to Golden. The first of 'em brought forty cents a pound in the big camps, but the last end of 'em went fer a nickel apiece. Down at McQueery's they got another load for some other chaps a month after; pulled in over seventeen hundred fish at one clip, but them fellers didn't know how to peddle them out and lost money by shippin' 'em to Denver."

"How's the stock, Tracy?" inquired Jack.

"Doin' tiptop; we've got about one hundred and twenty head of horses winterin' now. Mike brought in a lot of forty soon after you went down trappin'. I keep a good watch on them haystacks this year to see that the snowflakes don't strike fire again. They burned up a couple years ago when I hed thirty ton of as fine hay as they ever get in this yere Park. I had all the stock that was bein' wintered, and some of the other fellows up the river had hay but no stock. The range had closed, so they had no chans't to get any

stock. Well, my hay ketched fire and, of course, I wouldn't see them horses starve, so I had to buy them fellers' hay. A good ba'r trap would have ketched something besides ba'r that winter if I had set a few out. While I'm tendin' to the corral Bill will tell you about that hole in the door frame," pointing to a badly mangled orifice about as big as an orange.

"Shotgun?" queried Jack.

"Yes," said Bill; "shotgun—kingdom cum," and he had to straighten out his vocal impediments and tell it slowly, although it was a hard task for him, and his red whiskers and hair would rise up in their wrath, seemingly, as he stuttered along:

"Yer see, Dick Bradner came along one day over from Rattlesnake, and said he wanted a good jack-rabbit shoot. The snow was just right and he was gone all afternoon. He got half a wagonload, I guess. Along about dark he steps in on the way to the corral and sets his gun up aside the fireplace with the other guns. I was just beginning to get grub and had a pan of flour mixin' up some sour-dough bread, the lamp standin' in front of the pan and me at the other end of the table from the door frame. I was puttin' in some good licks on that bread, for sour dough needs a lot of punchin', and guess I had my head leanin' out pretty well toward the door. I heard some one step in from the outside, but didn't look up to see who it

was, when there came a flash, and kingdom cum, I thought my head had caved in. The splinters flew into the bread and the powder smoke choked me clean up. All I could see was that crazy fool Irish Mike, his face as white as it will be when he's gone over the range, standin' there with Dick's gun pintin' to the roof. That idjit never sees a new gun standin' round but he must pull it up and aim it at somethin'. You know how he shoots. Dick must have left the gun at full cock, as he allus does. It was lucky it went off before he got the barrel on a level with the lamp, or we'd all been in kingdom cum."

"You got some of the powder in your face," remarked Jack, noticing the blue pits sprinkled here and there in Bill's forehead.

"Yes," said Bill, energetically, with several powder-burned adjectives; "he leaves his mark everywhere he goes. Pity the foolkiller don't git him."

Tracy had joined the party again just in time to hear Bill's bouquet of choice epithets.

"Tain't so much coz he means to do anything harmin', but the big brute is so allfired strong and clumsy that when he sets out to do anything he busts everything he teches. Why, he went to pitchin' hay off the far stack and must have thought the fork handle would hold up the whole five ton, fer he snapped it like a ginger cake just outen the oven. Then he was

helpin' put up logs on the barn. We had the top logs most up on the skids when she fotched up again' the cross log that the skid was leanin' again'. He reaches the ax up and sets the blade under the log and pulls on the handle, and away went my dollar-and-a-half handle. He broke it square off. Took me nigh onto a week to dress another out. But he's a good worker. All he needs is a sledge and a big enough drill so he won't miss the head on't and he can pound that 'til jedgment day if the feller turnin' the drill keeps a good lookout for his hand from bein' hit when the Irishman misses the drill."

"I see he left his rifle," remarked Jack.

"Yes; said he didn't want it at the mines, an' he allows he'll come back afore the range opens to pick out a hundred and sixty acres somewhere in the Park. Likely as not he'll see you in Georgetown, but yer got some snow climbin' to do. Thar ain't many goin' out now, and I heerd Bill Redmon say he'd have to use 'skis' pretty soon and drag the mail on a sled. When yer goin' out?"

Jack thought a minute or two and then replied:

"I guess I can make it day after tomorrow. That will be the 17th of January, and I guess 'Red' will bring the pony back and you can feed both of them for me. By the way, I guess I'll have to snowshoe it in about beaver-trappin' time. I've got a little business myself down near the agency."

Tracy and Bill eyed each other quizzically and tried to guess the mission, but Jack gave them no satisfaction.

"I'll be back here by the middle of April, if not before. Beaver begin to chew the trees down in early March, don't they?"

"Yes," said Tracy; "but it gets lonesome as all git out before Aprile. If yer comin' in that soon, why in Christmas don't yer stay now? We've got grub enough and we can go back in the timber, mebbe so, and ketch a grizzly or cinnamon about six weeks from now."

"No; can't do it. Got to go back to the States and attend to some business, sure. You can have all the grizzlies that are loose. By the way, you got that silver tip since I left."

Jack was admiring a fine skin that was nailed up on the inside of the cabin, taking up the greater portion of a wall ten feet long and eight feet high.

"We got that out on the Blue about four weeks ago. I shot him eleven times afore he quit bein' sassy," said Tracy, with little or no concern, as if killing a grizzly was on a par with breaking a broncho. "I'll get twenty-five dollars for that pelt in the summer if I take it to Denver."

With the dishes cleared away and everything in readiness for the night, Jack, Tracy and Bill sat

around the fireplace smoking their pipes. The pine knots sputtered and glistened with deep, red-inflamed eyes as Jack told of the Rock Creek pow-wows.

"You see, old man Meeker has been trying to teach the Utes how to plow, how to subtract and divide and to carry wood, while the squaws crochet, hemstitch and make sofa pillows."

"Yes, I see them redskin devils tote firewood," broke in Tracy. "If there's anything an Indian despises it's work. They won't even walk when the snow is belly deep. I've seen six of 'em on one little cayuse wallerin' through big drifts at timber line. Why, durn their pictures, a Ute won't cook if he can beg a bite anywhere, let alone plow, and he'll freeze to death afore gettin' wood for a fire if thar's a squaw within a mile to git it fur him. The trapper told us you would git yer fill of Injuns."

Bill crossed his legs and then uncrossed them again, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and his neck began to swell. He wanted to say something right bad. Pulling a string off his buckskin pants leg, he commenced tying it into knots, nervously fingering the ends.

"Them gol durned skule teachers is all right back in the old red skule-house in—in Missouri," he said, "but kingdom cum, when they try to make them blanket Injuns plow it's time fur white folks in Mid-

dle Park to put up a stockade and lay in lots of 45-90's for Sharp's old reliable, and a dozen or two Colts' frontier sixes. Them's my sentiments, and don't yer ferget it."

"Bill hit the nail on the head," echoed Tracy.

Jack was studying the red, gleaming eyes of the pine knots, and the moccasin prints in the snow on the high divide seemed to gather again in the ashes. He started suddenly, as if an inspiration struck him.

"Boys, it will come to it. That bunch down in the willows have been off the reservation a long time. Meeker can't get them back without a regiment of soldiers, and he hasn't got along that far yet. Susan is the 'woman in the case,' and she's putting the young bucks into a trance about encroaching white folks, while the old fighters, like Colorow and Douglas, sneak up behind and pat her on the back. Ignacio, Yamanatz—not even old Ouray—can stop them if they once get a supply of powder and lead. Wait until the next annuities are paid in and Uncle Sam will have to send a burying squad over there. They will not do anything for some time; they haven't any meat, no bullets to kill deer with, not even salt." Jack stopped for a breath and Tracy took up the conversation.

"I seen yer was good and strong agin' Colorow when yer found out he was here, but I didn't know it was that bad. 'Peers to me yer must have had a grudge agin' him wuss'n yer hev let on."

"Yes," echoed Bill, "s—s—sumthin' must a s—s—set yer afire down below."

"Well, Bill and Tracy, that old scalp-lifter followed me like a shadow for two days, ready at any moment, if chance presented, to plant the steel in a spot where it would take, as they say when you are vaccinated."

The frontiersmen both jumped to their feet with one impulse to get hold of their "Sharps," as if to use them at once. Thus does habit breed in that rugged life. Then they sat down and listened to the rest of the story wherein Jack told of Yamanatz's warnings, of young Colorow's early mission to see if white man Jack was in his camp. But he left the most interesting story until the last, then mentioned no names, "And who do you suppose followed Colorow to see that no harm came to me?"

Bill and Tracy guessed every Ute in the White River Reservation. Finally Jack said:

"The only one that Susan fears."

"Chiquita!" exclaimed Bill and Tracy, in one voice.

"The same," said Jack.

"Holy smoke! Kingdum cum!"

"Yes, the fairest Indian girl that ever drew breath."

"Or ever strung a bow," chimed Bill.

"Or beaded a moccasin," said Tracy.

CHAPTER VII.

CHIKUITA WOODED BY ANTELOPE.

Dozens of tepee fires flickered against the dark night pall as Chiquita made her way toward the Ute village. The tongues of dozens of Indian dogs snarled their yippi-yappy language at each other, at imaginary evils and at the resounding clatter of hoofs as her pony loped along through the sage-covered mesa which skirted the river bank. Old bucks, warriors with necklaces of cruel-looking claws and beaded breast plates decorated with strands of human hair woven into pendants, stood in the shadow of the tepee fires. Shrill cries of hungry papooses rent the air; guttural jargon of young bucks in animated conversation rasped ominously against the sensitive ear with words which only an Indian can pronounce, made up as they are from Mexican, Spanish and Indian dialect.

Old squaws tottered into camp, loaded with bundles of fagots gathered from the fallen timber, and as these old witches with thrice-wrinkled faces peered into the gloom and discerned Chiquita astride "Bonito" they spitefully threw an armful of new

wood into the fire, raising a cloud of tiny sparks, and mutterings, half welcome and half imprecation, greeted her; all cringed before that dauntless maiden, yet all would have been glad to see her the victim of some tragedy. Her word was law, and that law a restraining influence which had thus far protected the settlers, the hunters, the trappers and the white men and women who composed the agent's family on the reservation, so far from the habitation of white men and so far from the protecting arm of the United States military.

Old Hutch-a-ma-Chuck was bedecked with a grotesque war bonnet of eagles' feathers, from the tips of which hung Arapahoe scalp locks; a necklace of grizzly claws surrounded his wrinkled neck, and in his arms he carried a worn-out army carbine, which had not been loaded in ten years. Uncas, wrapped in a military coat made from a United States blanket, stood with a big frontier six-shooter hanging listlessly from his arm, but his eyes snapped viciously as he smiled a welcome to Chiquita, the smile retreating into an ambushade of wrinkles which seemed to say, "Wait until I get a good chance." Broken Nose, with head encircled half a dozen times with the skins of rattlesnakes, needed no placard to warn the stranger against encroaching on this Indian's domain. Bowlegs, the dandy of the camp, was regal in a red-lined vest which

he wore lining outside, and an old plug hat picked up at the Agency or at some frontier town, ornamented with shipping tags and express labels, was jauntily tipped on one side of his head, while a gaudy plaid shirt flapped literally in the breezes, for an Indian knows not of decrees of fashion regarding shirtology and could not be induced to confine the biggest part of that splendid garment from view.

Nearly every Indian had some cast-off garment which had served its mission for a white man. Hunters, freighters, army men, etc., contributed old socks, trousers, coats, gloves, hats, caps, and even women helped bedeck these children of the forest in the glory clothes, but the "medicine" each and every one possessed was of the same general character—otter, beaver and mountain lion skins woven into the hair, constituting a charm to scare away evil spirits.

Yamanatz was by the camp fire of his tepee as Chiquita threw herself from the back of "Bonito." There were no impulsive greetings, merely a question or two, and Chiquita disappeared in the gloom of the night to her lodge, to dream of other scenes and to allow her imagination to carry her to the abode of the white man's medicine houses, where nurses comforted the maimed and sick.

In a couple of weeks the absent Utes returned, bringing provisions to last for some time, but these

did not abate the surly looks or conduct of the older ones, who chafed at the escape of Jack, nor assuage the enmity which the younger bucks bore him when they learned that Chiquita piloted him safely over the divide. They dared not openly deride her as they gathered in council to plan the breaking up of reforms which the government anticipated at the hands of the agent at White River.

They rebelled against cultivating the ground. They ridiculed the proposition of a Ute warrior at the plow, and muttered imprecations on the heads of the Indian Department.

About a month after Jack had left his camp at Rock Creek, Susan arrived at the village accompanied by her father, big chief Red Plume and a dozen young bucks, all eager to drive the whites over the range and out of Middle Park. But of these, half of them were desirous of annihilating the pale faces, simply to gain Susan's favor. The other half were striving to win Chiquita, and Susan was jealous of Chiquita to a marked degree, while Chiquita cared naught for Susan nor any of Susan's admirers. Susan, of course, had learned of the perilous trip of Chiquita, and every Indian youth had a deep admiration for Chiquita that Susan never received.

Red Plume had left the Agency to personally visit Colorow's village, and endeavor to obtain that surly

old monster's consent to move the village back to White River, as agent Meeker had requested. Upon one pretext and another Colorow delayed the matter day after day. In the meantime Susan was taunting Chiquita and Chiquita's admirers, while spurring her own suitors to acts of violence. This was not done openly, as Indian maidens do not take part in matters of love or war, in person, unless the circumstances are very pronounced. Susan felt that it was equal to the crime of elopement for Chiquita to escort the white man over the divide, and could she have had her way Chiquita would have been burned at the stake the morning following her return to the village, for this is the penalty inflicted when the maiden eloping is the daughter of a chief. Susan was particularly partial to Antelope and never tired of singing his praises, but Antelope had no eyes or ears for any one except Chiquita. Many a haunch of venison had this handsome young savage laid at the lodge door of Chiquita's mother, and handsome lion skins, eagle plumes and strings of elk teeth had he presented to Yamatz in his effort to win Chiquita.

As the moon rode high in the heavens, throwing long shafts of silvery light through the pine boughs, and casting deep shadows across the rushing waters of Toponas creek, Chiquita was wont to wend her way along the needle carpeted bank, her red lips

firmly compressed, while her eyes appealed to the heavens above for the return of spring and Jack. As she wandered here Antelope watched her from the sheltering shadow of some great rock, and chanted love songs in hopes of obtaining the least little recognition from her, for the Indian must win his bride by feats of strength, conquest or purchase, and not by personal servitude, as does his white brother, and his wooing must be indirect unless the maiden vouchsafes him the pleasure of a meeting in some glen or dell, where a few words may be spoken; but she reserves the right of making first advances or indicating by some sign that her suitor may address her, and if especially desired by her she will leave a token in the shape of a flower, spruce branch, or rabbit's foot where the lover may see it and heed the invitation.

Chiquita knew that the young warriors would eventually precipitate a clash, which might occur when Jack was coming or going from the reservation. She grew sick at heart when she reviewed the actions of Colorow, and how certain it was that Jack's life had been in peril, and always would be whenever he visited the Ute camps. She determined to stop the agitation which Susan was fomenting, or at least get assurance in some way that no overt act would be committed until after she and Yamanatz should be far away towards the "Blazing-Eye-by-the-Big Water."

The new grass was beginning to show itself along the creek. Mountain crocuses bloomed in the edge of the fast melting snow, as the white blanket gradually receded towards the tops of the high peaks under the heat of the early spring sun. Chiquita watched the beaver dams as the inhabitants industriously fashioned new homes for the next winter, cutting down the big trees and laying in a supply of willows for food and comfort. She looked toward the sun as he peered down into the deep cañons and besought the sun god to hurry Jack upon his way.

It was near midday, and Chiquita sat in a little grove of piñons, watching the splashing waters and gleaming flash of a trout darting hither and thither for a morsel as it swept along in the vicious, turbulent stream. She had hung a branch of spruce buds, entwined with a vine of Kilikinnick, upon a convenient tree, and she knew that it would bring Antelope to her. She knew the symbol by him would be interpreted, "hope in peace," but she intended that his hope must result in peace. As she listened she heard a voice close beside her. She had felt for some time the forest intuition that some one was approaching, but so silently had those footsteps glided along that no sound gave any warning.

"The daughter of Yamanatz is fair as the morning dove, and it pleases Antelope to do her bidding, for is

not Antelope a suitor for the hand of Chiquita, and has not Antelope done many things that make him worthy of the great chief's daughter?"

"The son of Big Buffalo stands erect. He speaks with the tongue of one who is a master, one day to be chief. Antelope is brave and his prowess great enough to entitle him to the daughter of any chief."

"The daughter of Yamanatz is as good as she is fair in that she speaks of Antelope in this wise, and it is a pleasure that the eyes of Antelope go thirsty and his heart hungry for the return of the love which Chiquita can give. It would be for Chiquita that Antelope would build the signal fires, that the Utes may put on their war paint and sharpen their hatchets to take the land where were the great buffalo before the paleface drove them into the deep sea where the sun goes down, and when the paleface has been driven away, then Antelope will claim Chiquita that she may sing him songs of love by his camp fire. And when Antelope is big chief then Chiquita will be the mother of many tribes, and our people will again hunt the buffalo which shall be as the needles in the pine forest, and no more shall the white man drive the noble Ute away from the paradise the Great Spirit has made for them. Hear me, daughter whose breath is as the perfume of the trailing arbutus and whose voice is like the voice of the lark. It is Antelope who speaks."

“The son of Big Buffalo is as brave as the wild horse who leads his herd to drink of the waters of the deep cavern, but know this, that in the sky Chiquita reads of deeds done by her white sisters who teach the little paleface to say ‘Our Father,’ and she hears the song of spirits from another land, as they sing ‘peace on earth, good will to man.’ The great Antelope is not a hen to cackle and run away at the sight of danger. He is brave but sees not that Chiquita thinks not of deeds of battle, nor the mighty buffalo, which the great Antelope says will return. It grieves Chiquita that the hand of the white man on the throttle of the great iron horse is driving our people back, back into the deep sea where have plunged the buffalo, and in their trail are the cities where the white children are taught that the red faced Ute is a dog, a coyote that snarls and bites and like the owl that goes hoo! oo-oo-oo-hoo! The paleface has widened the trail from the great ocean by the rising sun to the mountain, to the big water where the sun again quenches his thirst. The paleface has spread out as the wings of an eagle until the lands are gone. The smoke rises from the tall stacks and long ago have we been forgotten by the old Ute warriors who have passed into the great Happy Hunting Ground, there to live on pots of savory flesh while we slave in the sage brush or eat army rations and wear army blank-



ANTELOPE, THE WARRIOR, 1877.



ets, which are brought to us on the cars. This is civilization and it is so that Chiquita is to learn what her white sister does in civilization, and Antelope is asked to be patient and wait for Chiquita while she may see the fair sister unto the end. Then if Chiquita cares not for the civilized life, she will sit by the camp fire and sing to Antelope and Antelope may caress Chiquita and she will be his wife."

"Chiquita has spoken, Antelope will wait, but the heart of Antelope is sad, for it will be many snows ere Chiquita will make glad the lodge of Antelope and he will then be an old man," replied the Indian buck.

"It may not be so long. Antelope must not make war upon the white man. Antelope must stay the hands of the warlike Utes who seek the lives of Chiquita's friend and his brothers. The warriors of the Utes must not molest these people and it is Antelope who must obey Chiquita in this. Hear not what Susan says and all will be well."

"Antelope hears the words of Chiquita. Antelope will see that no harm comes to the friends of Chiquita, nor to the white man's brethren. Antelope cares not for Susan. Antelope hears not her words, which are cunning, but hears only Chiquita, the flower of the Utes."

CHAPTER VIII.

A GLIMPSE OF HOME.

Jack hastened his departure from the ranch on the Troublesome, stopping at Hot Sulphur Springs one night, crossing the Berthoud pass, early in the day, again fighting snow drifts as big as houses, as he skirted around and over the great continental divide but a little distance from the summit of cheerless Gray's Peak buried in her white mantle. Leaving his pony at Georgetown for the mail carrier to lead back, he continued his journey by rail to Denver and from there eastward to his home. Jack dearly loved his New England home and, as the old scenes again appeared before him, he saw new beauties to enchant and impress him. His mother, sister and sweetheart were all on the veranda of the grand mansion, and, as he jumped from the carriage, he found himself attacked by a center rush such as no college boy ever before struck. At least five touch downs were scored before they broke away.

"Did you bring any Indian things?" all demanded in a chorus.

"I say Jack," said Hazel, "where is the pony you promised me?"

"I want those eagle plumes for my hat," said one of his sisters. Even his mother could not resist the avalanche of wants and, during an opportune lull, archly asked if there was any danger of her having to give up the "spare room" to an Indian daughter-in-law, which of course produced a laugh at the expense of Hazel.

With the first greetings over, Jack at last got his mother and father alone, and plunged into the subject uppermost in his mind.

"My son," his mother commented, "be cautious regarding your actions with this heathen daughter of the wilderness. You can not tell what kind of an ambush she may lead you into. Fancy Hazel trotting about educating one of the young warriors!"

This was logic with a vengeance. Even Jack could not gainsay it. It was the same old proposition of woman's prerogative to outdo a man. Jack pondered over the trip from the Ute village across the divide and the night camp in the willows. He looked a little sheepish and waited in discreet silence.

"Is it necessary, Jack," asked his father, "that you should go to this unheard-of mine with the old Indian? Why not let him go and return with the treasure alone as he has done before?"

"He is too old to attempt the journey and it is his desire that Chiquita be one of the party, as he will give the mine to her and myself equally," answered Jack, not at all assured that the reply would make matters any better.

"Have you such an unbounded faith in a crafty Indian as to believe that he knows of any such fabulous treasure that even a nation might send an army to snatch away from its rightful owners, and that he will lead you to this mine simply to reward you for standing as press agent for his equally crafty daughter?"

Jack saw that his father was beginning to tread upon dangerous ground, that it would take but little to cause an unpleasant scene unless he could overcome the prejudice now gaining ground with his parents. He keenly felt the implied lack of confidence which both displayed, and for a moment he was inclined to become a trifle skeptical himself, but he quickly reasoned, "If I show any weakening they will hammer all the harder."

"Father," he slowly began, "and mother, you are both ripe in the experience of this world, with the civilized method of taking from the untutored forest man his hunting ground, his home, by the simple process of a representation from each state of a government; a proposition is voted upon to drive this native

farther and farther toward the setting sun, farther and farther back, until now he lives in a barren country, his larder empty and his proud mien broken. The remnant of former greatness drooped to a low ebb of cunning, outmatched only by the cunning of the frontier statesman, backed by the grasping political land-grabber and office-holding despot bidding for votes—these jackals whose blighting breath corrupt juries, legislatures and even the church into a belief that it is justice to waylay the child of nature in the onward march of civilization, to wrest from him the land which God gave as an heritage. Yes, father, I have unbounded faith in Yamanatz that he can and will show me the greatest mass of gold in one mine ever uncovered by the hand of man. I will forestall you as to finance. See, in this pouch is some twenty pounds of gold dust, which the great chief gave me for ‘pin money,’ and in the strong box of the express company is one hundred pounds of the same kind of dust. This is earnest money. This deposit, made of his own accord, warrants my belief in his ability to produce the property. Coupled with this was the watchfulness over me by both Yamanatz and Chiquita, and but for their care and warning I should not be here now.”

As Jack unrolled the buckskin pouch of nuggets and grains of dull, rich gold, the look on his father’s

face changed from one of intense scorn to deference, from sarcasm to a fawning smile. The avarice in his nature manifested itself in so apparent a manner that Jack was tempted to make one little fling, but restrained himself.

“My son, what you have uttered about the Indian being deprived of his land is the old story. Every once in a while it comes out in a little different cover, but are we to blame for the actions of our ancestors? They came here to live, to escape the tyranny of rulers whom they renounced, and in the seeking of a new world were obliged to treat with these pagans. Is it not far better to have this country populated with a race of God-fearing, civilized, labor-giving people, a people who by their master minds and master hands today provide the world with food, with clothing, with machinery that other nations may become enlightened and as progressive as we are?”

“Yes,” interrupted Jack, “and with our own machinery send back goods and experienced laborers to compete with the skilled labor we have educated up to the necessary standard. You would add also, that this class of citizens, with its Saturday night carousals and Monday’s line of police court criminals, is superior to the noble red man, who knew not fire water nor knavery until these civilized, God-fearing people taught it to them.”

"Well, Jack, are you going to head a tribe of Utes to drive us back across the big sea?"

"No, father, I guess I shall have all the work of philanthropy I need in piloting this young heathen through the 'hell gate' of learning into the whirling vortex of society and accomplishments," laughingly answered Jack.

"When will you start on this quest?" timidly asked his mother.

"Not later than the first of March, for I must be at Rock Creek soon after that time, and part of the trip is via the snow shoe route."

Just then Hazel and Jack's sisters knocked imperatively for admission.

"Oh—ee, Jack, is that real gold dust in that nasty looking bag?" said Miss Hazel, as she sniffed at the pouch suspiciously.

"Yes, Miss Tenderfoot, that is the real stuff."

"What is that you call me, tenderfeet? Why, my feet are not tender."

"Oh, that is the mountain name for what sailors call 'landlubbers,' and—say, when I get a couple of wagon loads of that you will tack my name onto your own with a little hyphen, won't you, dear?"

"I say, Jack," broke in one of his sisters, "did you run across any good looking white men, with lots of money, that want some one nice, 'to cook for two?'"

And the dear little apron-bedecked bit of sunshine pirouetted on her toes in gleeful anticipation of Jack's reply.

"Sure I did. Bill commissioned me to get him a cook, dishwasher, milkmaid and wood chopper,"—

"Hold on, Mr. Jack, I draw the line on milking. Ugh! I tried it once down at Uncle John's and I squirted my eyes full of milk. You need not laugh so. Uncle John just laughed fit to kill himself. That wasn't half so bad as Hazel, though. She tried to put blankets over the little pigs so they would keep warm, and when the old pig chased her"—

"You stop, stop, stop! Fire! Water!" screamed Hazel and no one ever found out what happened during the chase.

Then sister Katherine wanted something.

"Jack, you know what you promised to get me once, and you said when you had enough money you would buy me a nice canary and brass cage, and now that you have got it—such lots of it—won't you keep your word?"

"They raise larger and louder voiced birds in the west than they do in the Hartz mountains. The 'Rocky mountain canary' is the greatest warbler on earth. I have my mind on one that is a daisy and when I come back you shall surely have it."

"Oh, Jack, you are so good," murmured she.

Jack's eyes twinkled as he thought of the joke he would have on Katherine, but he never said a word. Turning to Hazel he said: "Well, Lady Jack, what do you think of my chaperoning a dusky maiden for several years in her search for a continuous performance of good deeds, hospitals, nurses and the study of political and social economy? Do you think her thirst will find a quencher?"

"Oh, Jack, go by all means, only don't attempt to get her into any clubs or societies and expect me to help you out. I recommended Daisy Deane for initiation in our B. A. F. club,—you know 'Bachelors Are Forbidden,' and she got one black ball. Daisy is a stenographer, you know, and her employer is Mr. Doolittle and Mrs. Doolittle is our High Priestess."

"Yes," said Jack curtly, "and she does not belie her name, I guess."

"That isn't all, Jack. Mrs. Doolittle has got her ax sharpened for me, I understand, at next election. I was going to run for corresponding secretary, but I guess I will give it up!"

The short visit made to his home was devoted mainly to making arrangements with tutors and deciding on the best lines to follow in fitting Chiquita for the work she had chosen.

Hazel and his sisters made quite a bit of sport of the undertaking, but Jack took it all good naturedly,

holding his own against the combined forces in repartee.

After these details were disposed of he joined Hazel at her home for a few days, then started for the frontier.

CHAPTER IX.

UTE, BIG WARRIOR—NO PLOW.

The diuturnal petticoat of snow which clothed the mountain was getting shorter and shorter as the diurnal sun crept farther and farther north on his summer ascension. The beavers were busy, tooth and tail, building new dams and repairing old ones. The Ute ponies were getting fat on new buffalo and bunch grass, and the tender-eyed does were seeking higher altitudes when Jack again reached the old trail leading to the Indian village on Rock Creek.

Chiquita spied the lone horseman long before he was aware of his proximity to the old camping ground.

"Chiquita heap glad to see Jack." She made her welcome, palms to the front, raised high in the air.

"How! How!" replied Jack and he looked askance at Chiquita in wonderment that she should be so far from the village. "Jack no sabe," he continued, and looked from one point of the compass to another for a familiar landmark.

"Chiquita know, see Jack, old trail behind big peak, new trail this way, when Jack go where sun

rise, ground covered with heap big snow—no see this trail.”

“Me sabe. Where Yamanatz, Colorow, Antelope?”

Chiquita smiled at the first, became grave at the second and a flash shot from her eyes at the word Antelope, then her face saddened as she looked into Jack's very soul. “Yamanatz well, Colorow gone to Agency, Antelope ready for big pony race—Susan want Antelope, Antelope no like Susan, like—mebbe so Jack knows,” she said with an arch look. “Antelope get up big race when white man come from Hot Sulphur Springs with heap fast pony to race Ute ponies—mebbe so Ute win ponies—white man walk back, Antelope heap smart. Plan big race, big dance and big games among the braves. Susan she put Antelope up to it, beat all Indians and white men, win Susan for his wife, carry her off to his tepee where she sing songs in twilight. But Antelope tell Chiquita he no race—just make believe. Antelope wait for Chiquita, but”—and she stopped abruptly with the frightened look of a startled deer as she gazed again into Jack's face.

“When race?” he asked.

“Three moons.”

“About August,” said Jack to himself. Then aloud, as a bright thought came to him, “Does Chiquita sabe name of white man's ponies?”

"Me sabe one," she replied.

"Jack sabe one heap fast pony in Middle Park. 'Brown Dick,'—run like the forked lightning out of the clouds."

Chiquita looked surprised and interrogatively answered, "Mebbe so 'Brown Dick' beat 'em Ute ponies, white man ride back?"

At which Jack laughed heartily. Chiquita continued: "That is the pony Antelope think no run much, heap fast, but Ute beat him. Antelope bet money, beads, buckskin, two ponies and other Utes bet heap lot."

"Has Yamanatz bet anything yet?" asked Jack.

"Yamanatz don't know—wait Jack come—Jack tell Yamanatz what to do."

Jack knew the horse well and all the people interested in the races and decided to stay and see the sport. Even had Yamanatz desired to go to the big mine, they would go later. On reference to his calendar he found a total eclipse of the sun would take place in August and he desired to see the Indians under this phenomenon as well as in their sports, and witness the struggles for the hand of Susan.

Upon arrival at the Indian village Yamanatz greeted Jack in the customary fashion. It was not long before they arranged to wait for the August festivities, then start for the desert mine from the

Agency, to which point the Rock Creek village moved a short time after Jack's arrival.

During the three months Jack spent his time prospecting, hunting, and studying Indian character. Chiquita made rapid strides in her studies under his tutorship and by the time set for the races she could converse very well in English and read ordinary words. Jack watched the ponies and the athletic braves as preparation was made for the great event.

For days the frontiersmen along the reservation border had been wending their way to the Agency. Gamblers and confidence men from the nearest mining camps ran over to gather in a few dollars which would be "easy money." The Government's long delayed annuities and rations were to be distributed the week before the contest, so every Indian had money to bet or to buy plunder with. Groups of Indians, squatting on their haunches or kneeling beside a big blanket spread upon the ground as a table, gambled or traded their wares in common with the visitors.

On a big Navajo blanket sat Chiquita, making beaded moccasins, while near by on another blanket rested Susan, engaged in beading a buckskin shirt. Off at the side with bridle reins dragging, four ponies fed on the stubby grass as their owners, two Indians and two cowmen, played Spanish monte. The cow-

men wore heavily fringed buckskin shirts and broad-brimmed hats, each hat having a leather band and leather string which passed back of the ears and under the back of the head to keep the hat from blowing off. Their feet were clad in high-topped boots, from which clanked the cruel Mexican spurs with tinkling bells. Each—and, in fact, every man on the reservation, had six-shooters—some four, and nearly all carried some make of rifle, not that they feared any evil, but it was second nature to be prepared for game of any kind. Another mark of civilization was the red bandanna handkerchief tied loosely around nearly every man's throat.

Oaths of the most curdling nature bellowed their way incessantly into the ears of the onlooker. A brightly painted Indian with eagle feathered bonnet and a string of grizzly claws around his neck, won a mule skinner's money. The latter turned loose a wild yell and a string of hair-raising adjectives, accompanied by the pistol-like crack of his fifteen-foot whip, and stalked off to his mules, swearing "agin the Gov'n'ment, the redskin and hisself"—chiefly in the end "agin hisself." Jack hailed him.

"Pard, I've seen you before."

"Mebbe so, stranger; I've lived in these hills many snows," answered the freighter.

"Didn't you lose some blankets about a year ago in

the Wet Mountain valley, near Buena Vista?" asked Jack without mincing matters.

"That's what I did, but I got 'em back and—well"—and he stopped as Jack commenced to smile. "What pleases you, stranger?"

"I was picturing in my mind what that fellow's wife, if he had one, and she could have seen him, would have said after you fellows got through heaving him into that dirty pond instead of hanging him."

The man of mules and wagons broke into a long guffaw that echoed back from the woods, and circled his long whip about his head, allowing the big broad cracker to settle lightly the length of the lash from him as daintily as an expert caster lets his flies settle into a riffle where the big trout hide, then with a fierce backward motion and overhand shoot to the front the long sinuous black snake straightened out with a vicious snap that made Jack wince, for it told the rest of the tale of what happened to the blanket thief before "court" adjourned. Then the freighter finished his remark.

"Well, that onery cuss that stole my blanket has got my mark on his hide, made like that."

"Yes, I think he must have about fifteen of them the way the whips cracked as he ran the gauntlet between about thirty of you. Did he live?"

"Oh, yes. That is he was alive when we left him on the prairie, headed for the Missouri River."

"I was on my way to Leadville. Buena Vista was the end of the railroad and in looking after some freight at the depot I saw the preliminaries of opening 'court' and execution of 'judgment' against the prisoner," explained Jack. To which the grizzled teamster replied:

"It looks cruel to one not familiar with frontier life. It seems a crime, the justice which overtakes horse thieves and camp prowlers, while those who commit greater crimes go free. But there are no two things so essential to life on the border as blankets and horses. We have to sleep and travel. Hotels don't pop up for the asking, with warm beds on a winter's night, nor do horses grow out of a pine bough when a man is miles away from any habitation. If men be too onery and sassy and get to be too handy in their gun play with each other we make no fuss if both 'go over the range with their boots on'—a-killing of them fellers does not necessitate an honest man's freezing to death. We never hang a man, nor shoot him, if he steals our grub or watch, or even gets our gun, but blankets and horses are sacred property. But what be you doin' in here?"

"Came over to see the Ute races and study Indians," replied Jack.

"So did I, but to make it more binding I brought in a train of government plunder for the Agency,

some plows and mowin' machines and school house desks. Say, but I'd like to see some of these redskins trying to cut a furrer down that sage brush flat or sittin' at one of them desks doin' sums in 'rithmetic. More'n likely they'll be makin' pictures of Parson Meeker crossing the divide on a sulky plow under escort of Uncle Sam's cavalry," at which the freighter turned his gigantic laugh loose again.

Just then two men in "store clothes" picked their way around the various groups of horses and Indians, stopping a short distance from Jack and the freighter, whose sobriquet was "Cal." As the new comers faced square about Cal eyed them a moment and then said to Jack:

"You see that red-faced, black mustached feller standin' there? Well, that's Sam Tupper, the graveyard starter of the Animas and Wet Mountain valleys. I seen him make the first corpse in Silver Cliff. Wonder what he's doin' up here. Sure as gun's made of iron he's up here for mischief. It was October and the first blizzard of the season caught us all with short wood and no pitch hot. Every prospector around the cliff made for 'Nigger Barber's' place—afterward it got a regular name, the 'slaughter house,' kase 'Nigger,'—he was half Indian, half Mexican and balance coyote—had two great big stoves to keep us warm. Four fellers rode into the Cliff about 10 o'clock, cold

and hungry, and expected to find a tavern started, but they were a little early, for the camp was right young, so they got permission to use some feller's tent near by—one of the four was Charley Rogers"—

"Owner of 'Brown Dick,'" interrupted Jack, in surprise.

"Yes; and Frank Mitchell, Les McAvoy and Paddy Dinslow. Les was a bad man, no mistake. His daddy was a judge in one of the northern counties and when Les was a kid the old man would take the youngster to some of the faro banks, hold him on his knee and seem to think it cute if the little gambler picked up a 'sleeper' and sold it to the barkeep for lumps of sugar or a bottle of pop. Well, Les got pretty tough. Worked some, but liked his 'licker' and was allus waitin' to pick a fuss. He was nervy and could fight with fists, stove pokers, 'toad stabbers' or six-shooters, it was all the same to him. Sam and 'Nigger' both knew him of old in Trinidad and Silverton. The first night after the boys got into the Cliff they dropped into 'Nigger's' and got into a game of faro. Les piled his stack of reds above the limit and Sam there, who was lookout, told Les to take 'em down. Les lost on the turn, but before the dealer could rake in the chips Les snatched the extra ones off the top of the pile. If he won, the dealer only paid the limit, and then Les would talk bad. All of 'em were scared of Les and

no one wanted to make a beginning, so they humored him, but the next night they laid for him. I met Frank and Charley durin' the day and they said Les had been run out of Silverton, and he remarked as he came into the Cliff, 'Boys, mebbe it's my time to die with my boots on in this very camp, but I'm game.'

"It was almost 8 o'clock and 'Nigger's' was jammed. There was a big crowd at the table near the end of the bar. I sat at a table parallel to it, the big red hot stove making the apex of a triangle about the same distance as the tables were apart. The deal which old Colonel Crumpy was making came to an end. I was winner and thumbing my chips, when bang went a gun at the other table. Say, but did you ever see two hundred and fifty crazy, desperate men push and crowd out of gun play range? Well, there was lots of tenderfeet in that gang. They jumped onto the 'mustang' table and then to the hazard table and into the crowd, pell-mell, out of windows. One feller was so scar't he never stopped to open it, but went kersmash through glass and all. Durin' this I backed away keerful like to the wall between two windows. I knew if any of 'em started to run it would be in the middle of the room and I didn't feel like risking my back to that crowd. My gun hung handy in case of a free get-away, or die a doin' it. As I felt the cold green boards rub my spine I seen the rest of the show.

It don't take a man a lifetime to move when guns are speakin'.

"It seems a kid, with sickly taller-like face and pinched cheeks, a young feller from the States lookin' for a gold mine, who got broke and nothing to do but clean spit-kits in 'Nigger's' and tend bar, had been exercised a little with the cards, dealing faro, and they put him on watch with a big Colt's old-fashioned navy on his lap, all cocked and ready for business, with instructions that if Les did any more funny work to plug him. Les had bet his stack as high as he could pile 'em and lost, grabbed the extra chips, and to the dealer's 'You—put them chips back,' Les slid up the back of his chair. He was keepin' cases and had his back to me, reachin' fer his gun. He had on a pair of blue overalls, and the hammer of that six-shooter got caught in the corner of his pocket. I seen him tuggin' to get it out, and the dealer, whose name was Bert Lillis, had lifted the big cannon, the muzzle half way across the table, and with both hands pulled the trigger, got scared, dropped the gun and was trying to skin under the table. He turned his head sideways to keep from scratching his nose, and just then Les got into action. He leaned on his left hand over the middle of the faro layout, put the muzzle of his gun against the eye of the dealer as he was sliding down and fired. As Les was doin' this Sam Tupper was busy, but Les

had his eye on the lookout, who dared not move his hand for fear Les would git him first. As quick as Les made his play at the dealer, Sam reached for a drawer about six inches from his hand and grabbed a pearl-handled, silver-plated gun. As Les turned with uplifted arm, cocking his weapon, Sam stepped to the edge of the drygoods box on which the lookout's chair was placed, his weapon pointing straight at Les's heart. Before Les could fire there was a flash—a report. The smoke from the pearl-handled gun wreathed around Les's head as he turned convulsively, frantically trying to get the muzzle of his pistol on a line with Sam, who stood with the least perceptible smile waiting for the eye of his opponent to catch his own, but as Les's body slowly swayed and pivoted the gambler knew that in a moment more all would be over. The fingers which tightly gripped the murderous firearm now slackened, gripped again, then the pistol dropped to the floor; a body straightened up its full height, the head thrown back in defiance and with eyes rolling upward, Les McAvoy fell prone to the floor backwards. As he fell that man standing there stepped off the box with the pearl-handled gun cocked for a second shot, and hissed between those white teeth of his, 'You got it that time.' The jury heard no evidence of any shots but Lillis' and the one Les fired—no bullet was found from a Colt's navy, round ball. A conical ball rested

just beneath the skin in the small of the back. The jury said, 'Justifiable homicide at the hands of Bert Lillis,' and I heard that Lillis died the next day."

"And that is the man who did the deed?" asked Jack, as he gazed at a real bad man; "one of those who make the history of every country black with their infamous deeds, which they plan and then inveigle innocent people to execute."

"Yes," said Cal, "and these redskins are not much to blame for goin' on the warpath the way they are bamboozled about. The trouble is, them cusses in Washington, who never see an Injun and who don't know what a real live one is, pass laws and send commissioners and army officers and agents out here to investigate. Some are preachers, some cunning lawyers and some statesmen—they call 'em so. The investigation drags along while the poor devils go hungry. Rations are held back, blankets rot for want of transportation, and somebody back in the woodpile is getting rich all the time. Then the Injun takes it out of a party of prospectors or some poor rancher, or like as not holds up a train of mules and the mule-skinners 'bite the dust' after defending their own property. But I suppose in the end it is all for the benefit of what they call civilization. Let's go and see them ponies over there."

"Look," said Jack; "must have been a bunch of

folks come in last night," pointing to a regular settlement of new tents and camping outfits.

"Well, durn my pictures," ejaculated Cal. "Throw a rope on that blaze-faced, lop-eared son of Israel with a pack on his back and let's see his brand. Guess you find them everywhere except in Jerusalem. Hello, Isaac; where's Abraham?"

"Who'd you mean, my brodder or my fadder? My name is Cohen, and I come to make a locashun for a cloding store. Dis will be a fine blace for a town, und Cohen will be der bioneer merchant, ain't it?"

"Git out, you hook-nosed Jew; this is Injun reservation, and yer 'Uncle Sam' don't allow no store-keepers here, except his own pets!"

"What iss dot? I got no Ungel Sam; I got un Ungel Moses und Ungel Solomon, but no Ungel Sam. Ain'd dis a new town? Don' the shentlemans wand a negdie or hangerchief? I haf a"—but Jack and Cal had turned a deaf ear to the would-be "bioneer."

As Jack stepped around the trunk of a big pine the noose of a lariat circled around and settled over his head and arms; a short jerk and he was brought up standing. Cal looked on wonderingly, for at the other end of the rope sat a buckskin-clad cow-puncher mounted on a thoroughbred cow-pony.

"Now will you be good?" The bronzed face of "Happy Jack" broke into wreaths of smiles and happy laughter.

"Hello, Jack!"

"Hello yourself."

"Shake, old man—put her thar, Jack. Glad ter see yer. Never thought to see yer over here among the Utes."

"When did you leave Roaring Forks?"

"About a week ago; been looking for some horses that are missing."

"Jack, shake hands with Cal Wagner. No, not the minstrel man, but his equal just the same."

"Cal, this is 'Happy Jack' of the Bar E Ranch over in the Grand River country."

Both men, thus introduced, shook hands, and after a few exchanges of the day "Happy Jack" coiled up his lariat and, lifting his bridle reins, said, "I must look around this camp a while afore the races. May find some signs, but I'll see yer both again—adios."

The spurs jingled and his pony loped off toward the valley. Cal looked at the disappearing cow-puncher and turned to Jack, who said:

"He's as good one as ever straddled a broncho. He sure is a character and his name is well earned. One of the happiest men I ever met. I'll tell you about him as we take a smoke and watch the Indians. Down on Roaring Forks of the Grand River a young fellow from the east by the name of Eads took up a ranch. He was staked by some rich relative, and after buying a

bunch of steers and some American-bred horses, drove them over the Tennessee pass to the Bar E ranch, five miles above the big Hot Springs* where the Forks empties into the Grand. He hired 'Happy Jack' as boss of the outfit, and with two or three other cow-punchers he started in and built a log house, and when I was there seemed to be doing well. I was on a hunting trip from Middle Park and heard about the Bar E ranch and the Springs, so our party made the place our camping ground for a week. The grass was fine and all the stock rolling fat. His horses were in two bands—one 'used' on one side of the Forks and the other band grazed on the opposite side. They rounded up the horses once a week at least, and the range riders never let the stock get away very far.

"One evening just after grub one of the boys came down to the cabin from the corral and said, 'Old Martha has pulled her picket pin and vamoosed.' 'Martha' was stake mare. Jack said, 'I guess not,' and bolted up the bank to the open bench which run for half a mile back to the cedars and piñons, where the branding pens and corrals were. He walked out to where he had picketed the mare and pulled up the pin with about ten feet of rope left where it had been cut. It was just before sundown, and a bunch of horses which had been run into the corral when the stake

* "Hot Springs"—now Glenwood Springs.—EDITOR.

horse was changed had not gotten far away. Jack yelled 'Thief!' and for the boys to hustle and see if some of the bunch could be gotten back into the corral—a feat, you know, next to impossible when no one is mounted. As luck would have it, four went in when the rest broke, but we managed to get the bars up before they turned. It was but a few seconds' work to rope a 'saddle-wise' one and cinch him up. Jack had taken off his belt and it lay on the ground with his six-shooters back at the cabin. He pointed at mine and said, 'Give me that gun.' Throwing himself into the saddle, he was off like a streak of lightning. The mare's hoofprints were plainly visible in the trail leading toward the Grand River. About 9:30 o'clock we heard a yell and went up to the corral. Jack had the mare. Not a word was uttered, except 'She was in the middle of the ford just above where the Forks go into the Grand.' Both horses were covered with ridges of dry sweat and looked jaded, as though every inch of ten miles had been run in a death-race struggle. On the off side of 'Martha' a dirty red streak mingled with the sweat. As we went slowly back to the cabin, after picketing both horses, Jack handed me my belt and gun—a Colt's .41 double action. Two empty cartridge shells told the story of a tragedy. A week later one of our party found the body of a man on the bank of the Grand five miles below the Forks with two bullet holes in his back.

“Jack had one habit that city boys think belong to themselves”—

“Midnight lunches?” asked Cal.

“Yes; but Jack generally had his hungry spell about 2 a. m. Every night that our party was at the Bar E ranch Jack would wake us up and every one had to ‘break bread’ with him—only it was flapjacks instead of bread. Jack would do all the work, and he was an artist with the frying pan. He would turn those big cakes by tossing them out of the pan in the air, you know, and catch them after the flop. After our lunch a smoke, and while we smoked a few deals of Spanish monte and a story or two, then back to bunks. Yes, ‘Happy Jack’ is a character.”

As Jack finished his story of “Happy Jack” a shout announced the beginning of the trials of strength, endurance and courage, which would probably proclaim the victor for the hand of Susan. Standing erect with arms folded over his breast, Red Plume watched with seeming indifference the trials. Susan, seated upon her blanket, appeared even more so; in fact when it became apparent that Antelope was not to be one of the contestants she shook her head and disconsolately continued her beadwork.

The braves vied with each other in feats of running, wrestling, jumping, swinging from one tree to another, riding in all manner of positions on bareback, bridle-

less ponies; throwing knives at each other's heads, arms and necks in endeavors to pinion the victim to a tree without doing him any bodily harm; torturing themselves with cruel whips; gashing and lacerating the flesh; being suspended from a pole or bar by means of thongs thrust under the muscles of the shoulders, and other blood-curdling deeds original with the savage.

Old chiefs watched the young bucks, and as the games proceeded these old ones shook their heads or nodded in assent as success or failure rewarded the contestants.

All were in gala dress. War bonnets of elaborate manufacture bedecked some, while single feathers adorned others. Small hoops fastened to long sticks were held aloft displaying portions of a human scalp, the hair floating naturally from one side while the other side of the scalp was painted a bright red. Every Indian lovingly carried his pipe, the red slender bowl made from pipestone mined from quarries hundreds of miles away and guarded carefully from reckless souvenir and market hunters.

As a successful contestant received his reward and led his bride away, the onlookers rent the air with piercing yells; rattle-boxes split the ear with their characteristic din, and tom-toms bellowed their dull intonations with a certain amount of regularity which

produced that same agonizing monotony of sound found in a healthy foghorn.

In a group not far from the racing strip was Yamanatz, and thither Jack and Cal bent their way. Charley Rogers and his companions were making bets with anyone who would risk ammunition, money, clothes, ponies, blankets, guns, pistols or knives; and even war bonnets were staked. Yamanatz was about the only Ute who did not bet against "Brown Dick." Few of the white gamblers, who had come to fleece the Indians with their special style of confidence games, cared to risk their coin against Indian ponies or wampum. They wanted cash, and as the Indians had plenty to do to meet all the demands of Jack and his friends and Charley Rogers and his following, the gamblers saw little prospect of a coup.

The level, well-beaten, straight-away course stretched along between rows of tents, tepees and lodges out into the plain beyond. Indian races are not upon oval tracks and are not confined entirely to one dash over the course, but include a certain distance and back over the same ground, the finish being at the starting point. Other races are run where the contestant must lean from the pony's back and pick up a quirt or hat as the animal dashes past.

But the time for the great race on which the bets are made has arrived, and the restless, anxious ani-

mals have to be guided to the starting place by their riders and arranged in line with heads opposite the direction in which the race is to be run. Bare-skinned warriors on bridleless, saddleless ponies, a small, finely-braided lariat attached to the horse's jaw, sit like graven images upon their favorite steeds. "Brown Dick," whose rider is his owner, steps along jauntily, champng in eager fashion the silver-ringed bit supported by a silver ornamented Mexican braided-leather bridle, the loose reins held almost listlessly by the man in blue shirt and buckskin trousers seated on an English racing saddle. A little moisture around the roots of the delicately pointed ears shows that "Brown Dick" has been exercised. The muscles of the forelegs play beneath the skin as step by step he approaches the line; the veins in his arched neck stand out like small ropes, and the dilated nostrils reveal the pink membranes as each deep breath is inhaled. Charley has maneuvered for position, timing his arrival to such a nicety that the last slow step of his well-trained racer falls exactly as the pistol belches forth the signal to start. Simultaneously he utters a shrill "Go" and presses his knees violently into his horse's sides, leaning far out in the saddle and throwing his weight against the reins on the faithful horse's neck, who rears aloft, pivots in beautiful fashion and leaps in one bound clear of the line of frantic ponies,

and amid the warwhoops of Indians, the yells of the frenzied and the fear of defeat piercing his ears he dashes on to victory. The struggle is not long, and the spoils won from the vanquished nearly bankrupt the entire tribe until the next annuities replace their losses.

There are no imprecations nor villainous mutterings. An Indian is a good loser and bears defeat in a philosophical, stoical manner. Immediately after the exciting races come the feasts given to the successful competitors, and the following day finds the erstwhile holiday-arrayed village desolate and uninteresting.

Yamanatz, Jack and Chiquita began preparations for the trip to "Blazing-Eye-by-the-Big-Water," and soon followed the crowd of visitors making their way to the nearest railroad.

The last one to bid Chiquita "adios" was Antelope. He had little to say, but averred he would continually seek the aid of all the Ute gods, big and little, to bring the heart of Chiquita to Antelope's tepee.

"Antelope will wait many, many snows and take no other maiden," were his parting words.

The restraining influence which Chiquita and Yamanatz exerted vanished very soon with their departure from the reservation. Susan at once commenced to be vindictive, as jealousy and revenge gnawed at her heart. Chagrined and disappointed at the turn of

affairs in the competition by the young bucks for their brides, she coquetted with Johnson, well knowing that in him she would find an acquiescent if not an aggressive leader. Furthermore, he was the brother-in-law of Ouray and considered one of the greatest of Douglas' band of great warriors and fighters. She soon became, in fact, Johnson's squaw, and no one in all the Ute tribe was more regal in dress nor feared more as an enemy than Susan. Her silver girdles, beaded buckskins, elk-tooth necklaces and other feminine accessories were the envy of squaws, whose chiefs were also envious of Johnson—aye, even of any one of Douglas's band of braves.

While the races and general carnival were in progress at the Agency a portion of this renegade band had wandered far out in the plains one hundred miles east of Denver, near Cheyenne Wells, where they quarreled with and murdered Joe McLane, of Chicago, and fled back to the reservation through Middle Park—Colorow, Washington, Shavano and Piah. Washington was wounded and had his arm in a sling when they met the outgoing party, of which Charley Rogers, Jack, Yamanatz and Chiquita were members, then camped on the Frazier River. Colorow offered no explanation of whence they came nor their object, but all four were in a hurry and hastened along through the Park.

Arriving on the Blue, where old man Elliott peaceably conducted a ranch and with whom the Indians had been on good terms for years, they murdered him in cold blood and left immediately for the Agency.

Upon their arrival it did not take long to start the undercurrent of open revolt. Susan enlisted the sympathies of Jane, a vicious squaw, whose husband had a great many ponies. Jane had selected a fine piece of pasture land and under the rights of an Indian "squatted" upon the land in question. It was the best land near the Agency, and Meeker decided to use it for cultivation and to "school" the Utes in the use of the plow. Jane objected, and quarrel after quarrel took place, Douglas even going so far as to assault Agent Meeker in his (Meeker's) own home.

A compromise was seemingly effected by which Jane was to get another piece of land for her pasture and Meeker again set the plow to going, only to have the man in charge of the work shot at by two bucks who were concealed in the sage brush. Meeker had repeatedly asked aid of both state and Federal government. He begged for troops, as the lives of the white people were in peril. As the aged philanthropist listened to the council held in a smoke-smothered lodge, where warrior after warrior gave utterance to his opinion in a language absolutely unintelligible to any but a Ute, and when at last Douglas made his

measured, forcible, irresistible appeal to his brother savages to resist the onward march of the white people, he (Meeker) must have known his doom was at hand. Signal fires were constantly seen as night came on, and the murmur of discontent increased with the uncertainty.

Finally word came that troops were on the way. Captain Payne with colored, and Major Thornburg with white troops had been despatched to the Agency. The morning of September 30, 1879, saw the White River plateau under sunny skies—the air was warm and inviting. Twenty or thirty bucks of Douglas's band sauntered forth as though in quest of venison, others of the various bands had been out among the hills on similar errands, and it was not unusual for the majority of the whole Ute nation to be scattered throughout the reservation even beyond the lines for short periods.

Susan, Jane, Antelope and a few others wandered about the Agency buildings laughing, chattering and in the best of spirits. All seemed happy, Susan especially, and Antelope had not been so gay for a long time.

Still there was an ominous phase to their very good humor. It had that practical joke fatality which foreboded evil in every smile and made the heart sick for those who watched the sage-covered mesa and feathery clouds which floated from range to range. But a few

miles away toward the Red Cañon on Milk Creek the troops were hastening. As the advance line swung up to the narrow gorge a few Indians in warpaint suddenly came into view. The cavalry made an attempt to flank the defile and thus saved the entire command from being literally shot to pieces by Indians surrounding the open death trap into which they would have marched.

Hostilities were begun at once by the Indians. Major Thornburg in his attempt to cut through to the main body was killed, with thirteen others. The rest of the troops reached a place of safety, and with the dead bodies of their comrades, the carcasses of dead horses and mules and the wagons, formed a temporary shelter until breastworks could be thrown up. The command was not relieved until the 5th of October.

Runners carried the news of the ambushade to the Agency, reaching there at noon of the same day. During the excitement which followed and the shots directed first at the men who were putting a roof on a building, the venerable agent was killed and a barrel stave driven down his throat, log chains placed around his neck, and subsequently the savages in their fury held up the dead man's legs, imitating a man plowing.

The women were taken by Douglas, Johnson and other Utes to the old Rock Creek village and there held as prisoners until the middle of October. Susan



ANTELOPE, THE CIVILIAN, 1902.

was left at the Agency and did not know that her brave warrior had taken unto himself a new squaw under penalty of blowing her brains out, nor that Douglas threatened another with death unless she, too, became his Ute squaw, while the other Indians jeered, scoffed and insulted the wives of the men who lay dead at the Agency. Yet these bucks dared do nothing but taunt the poor, helpless women, as Douglas and Johnson were big chiefs, and the women owed their personal safety to the declaration that they were respectively Douglas's and Johnson's squaws.

Upon the body of Major Thornburg was found a picture of Colorow, this signifying that the death-dealing bullet that killed the officer had been fired by that crafty old savage.

After a tedious examination of both Johnson and Douglas by commissioners, Douglas was confined in the prison at Fort Leavenworth for one year. Colorow never was taken into custody.

When Susan learned that her wily spouse (Johnson) had been unfaithful to her, she started at once for Rock Creek with the intention of murdering the white woman; but she was too late, as the prisoners had been led away and delivered to their friends in a place of safety.

The Utes were afterward moved to the Uintah Res-

ervation* in Utah, but many of them visit the old Agency grounds, and at this writing (1902) Antelope again favored the White River people with his presence and his photograph in civilized attire.

*For authentic documents on the Meeker massacre see Chicago Tribune, Oct. 2-15, 1879; Denver papers of same date; Bancroft's History of Colorado; U. S. House Documents, 1879-1880 (Indian Commission).

CHAPTER X.

THE BLAZING-EYE MINE.

In Eastern California there lies a strip of country less than a hundred miles in length and thirty miles in width—the Gehenna of America—a basin so defiled that the abomination of the Israelites, the Valley of Hinnom, was a paradise; Tophet, where the sacrifices of children to Moloch were made by this Biblical tribe of Hebrews, was at least habitable. Death Valley lies two hundred and fifty feet lower than the tide water of the Pacific Ocean. Upon this strip of land grows no verdure, and within its confines exists no life save the scorpion, the centipede, the tarantula, the hideous gila monster and rattlesnakes, all more deadly poisonous than sisters and brothers of the same family found elsewhere, each species a continual menace to the others in the never ending battle for life—vindictive conquerors at last being vanquished by more malignant foes.

The desert is one mass of burning, blighting alkali sand. The heat is beyond human endurance, and what few pools of water may be found by digging deep into the earth are so pregnant with disease-breeding, loath-

some germs, that death is but hastened to the poor victim of thirst who attempts to assuage his sufferings by drinking the polluted reward of frenzied labor.

At one time the government established an observation station within the borders of this waste to give scientifically to the world an accurate account of the perils which await the prospector venturesome enough to visit this living ossuary—the realm of the dead and habitat of the uncanny. Records show that the government representative found the heat so burdensome that clothing was dispensed with, and in nature's primitive garb the lonely vigils were passed until the station was abandoned.

Years before, a prospector braved the perils of the desert and returned more dead than alive, but with golden sand and golden nuggets and tales of a mine whose splendor out-dazzled the wildest dreams. This prospector called the mine after himself, "Pegleg." He obtaining his sobriquet from the fact that one of his legs was a wooden peg. He organized a party and they entered the valley, never to return. Other parties were formed and attempted a rescue, only to leave their bones to bleach as monuments of man's distorted and perverse cupidity.

The government sent a detachment of soldiers, well versed in the knowledge of all the impending dangers, but none returned save a corporal, and he a raving

maniac, upon a thirst-crazed mule. Thus the famous "Pegleg" mine became a legend fraught with mystery and weird, blood-curdling memories.

It was to this mine, "The Blazing-Eye-by-the-Big-Water," that Yamanatz was to conduct Jack. The Utes in years gone by made the trip from the mountains to the desert land and returned laden with golden ornaments, their trappings covered with gold nuggets beaten into fantastic shapes. It took many moons in their comings and goings, and many fierce battles were waged with other tribes in the latter's endeavors to wrest the secret from the wily warriors, who knew of a safe but dangerous underground river bed, which wound its tortuous way beneath the sand-covered desert, cutting the wonderful deposit in half. But even this passage to that mountain of wealth was beset by terrors as frightful as those above the ground. Reptiles had ingress and egress from fissures leading to the surface, and one was in constant danger at every step, not from the trail alone, but from the roof and sides of that slimy cañon, the gloom of which added to the dark hideousness, as the feeble, flickering torches awakened the lethargic inhabitants of that abandoned inferno.

The trip from the White River Agency had been made by rail as far as possible. Every provision had been made that could be devised for protection

against the evils surrounding the dangerous mission. The nearest station which Jack could in any way "guess" would land them near a point from whence Yamanatz could find his way was Mojave. The curious of the little town watched the preparations of the trio as they made ready to prospect toward the Telescope range. The party consisted of Yamanatz, Jack and Chiquita, and an old "forty-niner" who was asked to join them under the promise of good wages and the usual "interest" in any claims which might be "staked." As they slowly made their way along the edge of the great Mojave desert, Yamanatz was continually on the lookout for some familiar sign that would indicate they were in the locality leading to the mysterious river bed. Finally the fourth day found them encamped at the edge of a low "bench," or hill, mountains arising from one side and an undulating, dreary waste of billowy sands stretching to the horizon on the other.

"It is good," said Yamanatz, continuing, "On the morrow Chiquita will go with the prospector to the stream where yonder mountain meets the sky. Chiquita will watch and wait until Jack and Yamanatz shall return. The prospector will find an old vein of mineral in which is gold. He must work upon that while Yamanatz and Jack go toward the setting sun, where the buzzards roost waiting for those who venture into Death Valley."

This satisfied the prospector, who answered, "It is not much that bird gets to put inside his 'bone box' sence the fools quit a-goin' ter ther 'Pegleg' mine. Ye hev bin told about thet, I guess, and ye don't look thet crazy as would attempt even a one hour's ride into thet furnass. I'll go with the Injun gal, and good luck ter ye."

"We will be gone five sleeps," said Yamanatz.

The second day found Jack and the Ute chief inside the well-concealed stone covered opening which led to the river bed. Armed with horsehair whips and gnarled piñon torches which blazed and smoked, they made their way, leading horses and pack mules along the subterranean passage. Occasionally the swashing of water smote their ears, and at intervals open fissures extending to the stream far below them were encountered, whereby cooling drink was obtained by means of a lariat and camp bucket. It was not difficult to replenish the leathern pouches provided for water.

The middle of the fourth day they reached the crumbling, disintegrated mass of quartz, honey-combed with gold. It was necessary to crush the decayed ore and extract the huge nuggets by washing in a pan. Occasionally the breaking of some of the rock revealed solid masses of pure gold, while in pockets of rusty, discolored quartz great handfuls of gold sand were disclosed. All that day and night Jack

worked with a frenzied fervor, loading saddlebag after saddlebag with the precious metal. Yamanatz assisted until all their receptacles were filled, then a couple of hours of rest—sleep was out of the question. The heat and excitement rendered it useless to attempt it.

Packing the valuable pouches together with the few camp requirements which had been used on the trip, the return was commenced. The entrance was reached in less time than it required going; but now it became necessary to mark a trail by which Jack could find the way back to the cavern alone. Monuments of stone were erected in triangles, which gave the needed bearings for future use. More time had been consumed than had been allowed, and starvation rations for man and beast became necessary.

When the last monument to complete the chain had been erected it was midnight, and it was decided to attempt the crossing of the desert strip at an angle. Hour after hour they traveled, yet at daybreak no blue haze, no lofty peak appeared in that simmering, sweltering, burning waste. The trail behind them was as water struck with a whip. The sand in front gave no alluring sign. The ponies labored—the mules were restive. Silently as a moonbeam falling across the earth the cavalcade moved. Another midnight, and Jack resorted to his knowledge of astronomy to guide them from that fearful death which another day would prob-

ably bring. The constellation of Cassiopea seemed to beckon him in her direction. Again the red copper-colored sun appeared above the horizon; a faint blue line in front gave hope of relief. The ponies were allowed free rein to choose their own way.

As the sun rose higher and higher the heat drove the pack animals into a frenzy. The oscillating motion of those in the saddle was almost unendurable. Gloomily they looked at each other—the one seeing that shrunken, skin-drawn, parched, pinched human horror in front, wondering if he in turn looked the same. Still they lived and hoped. Again hour succeeded hour until the midnight of another day arrived. Suddenly the mules gave a joyful whinny and started up a sandy gulch at a brisker pace than they had been traveling. The last of the water had been divided that noon and no food had been tasted for three days. In another hour they came to a rock where a little pool struggled only to lose itself in the sand. But by scooping away the earth while the animals were pawing, even biting, the very ground, Jack was at last able to save a little of the precious fluid and appease their immediate thirst.

A short rest and the march was again resumed. By noon, gaunt and hidedrawn, two Indian ponies stumbled along the burning sands. Two horsemen with vacant, stony stare, pitifully reeled in their saddles as

their horses wobbled slowly, painfully into the camp of the "Lone Fisherman." Pack mules with drooping, lifeless ears, tongues lolling from their mouths and hoofs cracking from contact with the poisonous alkaloids of the desert, staggered under their burdens as they toiled after the silent spectres in the lead. The dust-begrimed, skin-dried, withered, parched and blighted beings athwart those animated skeletons were Jack and Yamanatz. The load under which the beasts of burden tottered was gold. Death Valley had been invaded, and once more substantial treasure from the "Pegleg" mine gave positive evidence of the fabulous riches, surpassing the most wonderful opulence of ancient kings, which was accorded those who survived the horrors of the health-wrecking, life-destroying journey. A joyous welcome awaited the returned travelers. Chiquita had determined to get a rescuing party that day, but a kind Providence directed otherwise. In attempting the short cut from the last triangle of monuments Jack and Yamanatz had traveled in a circle.

Jack recovered his normal condition more readily than did Yamanatz. Before leaving the "Lone Fisherman," which the old prospector found of value sufficient to pay for working, Yamanatz and Jack again made the trip to and from the nearest located triangle and Jack had no trouble in future visits. He soon suc-

ceeded in obtaining from the Government a valid title to the ground.

The nucleus of that fortune was spent in fitting Chiquita for her college education.

She entered at once upon her studies, under the care of private tutors, and in two years' time the rapid advancement made placed her far along toward the goal of learning. Academic courses followed in quick succession, her wonderful intellectual powers seemingly never to weary or flag in their grinding evolution from savagery to civilized enlightenment during her self-imposed task of ten years in the bright fields of knowledge.

CHAPTER XI.

COLLEGE VACATIONS.

During one of the spring terms, when the birds taunted Chiquita with their freedom, Jack and Hazel proposed, during the recess of two weeks, that they all take a trip to the Indian Territory and visit the Cherokees, Kiowas and Comanches, among whose tribes were many relatives of Chiquita. Over a rough and dusty roadbed rolled a long train of coaches bearing tourists, farmseekers and business men through banks of smoke and clouds of cinders to the great farming lands of the west. At Coffeyville Jack disembarked his party and in a comfortable "buckboard" continued the journey. A couple of miles of dusty road between sweltering hedges of osage orange led them to the boundary of the Indian Territory. Along this in a never varying line for a hundred miles on the north side stretched farm after farm, divided from the highway and each other by thousands of miles of wire fencing. Bare cornfields and treeless wastes spread forth uninviting landscape, marked at intervals with the houses of the ambitious ranchmen, who, by pre-

occupation or purchase, obtained title to the soil. Alkali dust smarted the nostrils, and the glare of the noonday sun scorched the faces of travelers. Plowmen, making ready for the season's planting, rested their teams as the pleasure seekers stopped to inquire the road to California Creek.

To the south of the highway rolled a grass-covered prairie that seemed a great poly-chromed rug of velvet. The hand of man had not chiseled the virgin soil with plowshare, nor riveted its surface with post and rail. A well defined road led zigzag over its undulating bosom until the hideous regularity of section lines disappeared behind a friendly stretch of upland. Cottonwood, elm and oak became frequent as they entered the valley of the Verdigris and great stretches of forest-dotted park enchanted the eye and gave rest to tiresome monotony of treeless plain. Occasionally an unpretentious, unpainted shanty gave evidence of man, and inquiry proved it to be the abiding place of one of the precivilized occupants of unfettered expanse of the American continent, the other a "squaw man," who had made matrimonial alliance with the partially civilized companion.

"Jack," said Chiquita, after the inspection of one of these abodes of an Indian, who had adopted some of the ways and customs of his white brethren, "Cherokee once big Indian, now half man, half

coyote; little plow, little hunt, little eat—little good,” and she curled her lip in disdain as she contemplated the work of onwardness. Continuing the conversation in the more polished language of a college student, “Did not the Great Spirit, the one God of the Indians, put his people here in this paradise—this continent of flower-carpeted, forest-grown hills and vales, a people noble in thought, noble in dignified demeanor, with a belief in a religion simple and effective? Among Indians are no infidels or agnostics. All Indians believe in the Happy Hunting Ground and the Great Spirit. Do you know, Jack, of any country where the native race, indigenous to the land, compare with the noble red man as he was when the first white settlers occupied America?”

“Possibly the Arabs or early Egyptians might compare more favorably than any other nation that I know of,” Jack replied.

“Yes, but Egypt and Arabia are of today, whereas the Indians are wards of a great government, and your government has condemned the Indian to a worse Siberia than that to which Nihilist was ever transported. Look; there is a specimen of what a civilized government does to a native-born American,” pointing to a “half-breed” trying to plow with one steer harnessed up like a horse.

“Hello!” Jack sang out to the man thus referred to.

As the buckboard stopped a few rods from the shack, called a "hoos," the individual addressed pulled at his galluses and hat, then walked over to the fence, which enclosed fifty acres of newly plowed ground, said, "How?" and stood gaping at the travelers.

"Good morning," cheerily said Jack. "We are on our way to Pryor Creek and then want to go into the Kiowa Reservation. Can you tell us anything about the road?"

"Waal, I reckon yes. It's good goin' 'til yer git to the Verdigris. Thet nigh ho'se (meaning horse, pronounced with long o and aspirate s) uster belong to the 'Lazy L' outfit."

The answer was given in a drawling, sing-song tone, with full rests between every third word, when the speaker stopped to pick up a stick to whittle, to halloo at his steer or to show how straight he could expectorate a small freshet of tobacco juice between his teeth at some real or imaginary mark. His skin was a dirty soot color, and his raven black eyes and straight hair emphasized his ghastly pallor. He was tall and thin—built on the Arkansas plan of constructing ladders. His hips and shoulder blades seemed to meet, giving his long, lank legs the appearance of a man's head on jointed stilts. Jack made no reply to the remark about the horse with the "⌒" brand, but inquired the distance to the Verdigris.

“ It’s quite a patch. I reckon yer mought hev some ‘ navy ’ about yer close; jess the same if yer moughten—thanks.”

Jack had learned that a plug of tobacco had “ open sesame ” qualities among certain species of human beings, and in his war bag were several pounds cut into goodly sized pocket pieces. One of them he handed to the “ half-breed,” who tore off a corner with his teeth, absentmindedly putting the rest in his pocket. The “ tip ” had the desired effect, for “ Ladder Legs ” recounted in the drawl of the Cherokee half-breeds, with its characteristic aspirating, all the crooks, turns, fords and distances to the Kiowa Reservation. In response to Jack’s inquiry regarding the limited cultivation of the land so near the Kansas border, “ Ladder Legs ” vouchsafed this information:

“ A ‘ squaw man ’ has little ambition, and a half-breed none. The environments of Indian life make a ‘ States ’ man dejected and he soon outgrows the infant ambition which prompted him to marry a squaw that he might ‘ take up ’ land in the territory. A white man cannot live on the Indians’ ground except he marries a squaw or the daughter of a man who has had tribal rights conferred upon him; then he becomes an Indian and can have a fifty-acre pasture fenced, all the land he will cultivate, and the ‘ range ’ for his stock to feed upon. You see that bend in the river? Waal,

a white man from the States married the widow of a well-to-do Cherokee half-breed. He is educated and has grown-up daughters almost as white as you be, and a nice house well furnished, and he rents out a part of his land on shares to some 'niggers,' or half-breeds, and they cultivate all the land he can put under fence. Some day when this land is allotted he will own an immense tract."

"How about the range you spoke of?" asked Jack.

"The cattlemen up in the States supply a bunch of cattle to some ranchman having a good range or lots of open country, well watered, around his house. Probably the man has a lot of corn and wants to feed the cattle over winter and take profit in so much increase of beef, pound for pound, that these cattle gain. Nearly all of the ranchmen have hogs to run with the cattle, so there is another source from which a return is anticipated. Pays, did you ask? Sure; all get rich who will work. But over there on California Creek was a young fellow who had a snap of it if ever a man did. This young fellow married the daughter of an Indian missionary, a preacher from up in Kansas, who rewrote the real Bible in the Cherokee dialect, for which the tribe made him a full-blooded Indian, as far as any rights in the nation were concerned. After they were married they came down here with their fine duds and bought a ranch over on the creek

of a full-blood Cherokee. He lived there about four years. He had friends up in one of the Missouri towns in the livestock commission business and they had all kinds of cattle. They started the young fellow with four thousand fine steers in the spring, and told him to raise some corn for the next winter and feed the first lot on the range, then they would send in another bunch for winter care. Then there cattle drifted all the way to Texas, and do you suppose the lazy dude would try to round 'em up? No, sirree. He was just too nice. His hands were so soft he couldn't get a calf to the brandin' post in a corral, let alone rope a steer and brand him in the open country. The folks came down on him and he lost the ranch. His wife died and he went to Honduras, or the Philippines, or somewhere. But this yere land is all goin' to be allotted some day and then it is good-by to the freedom which we get here now. Yes, civilization kicks up a heap of dust. Good-by; stop and see me if you come back this way. Adios."

Chiquita seemed amazed to hear that an educated man from the civilized States would let such a golden opportunity pass him by. Mile after mile of the fairest cattle range was passed on their way into the Kiowa Reservation.

The time had arrived when Chiquita must return to college. During her visit to the old relatives who

had married into the Territory tribes she learned that a distant cousin of hers was to be shot for the murder of a fellow Indian. The tribal council had tried him and sentenced him to death six months before, but on the plea which he made for leave of absence to go to his old home among the mountain Utes in Colorado to see his mother and father before he died, they had respited him. The time for his return expired at noon the very day that Chiquita was to start back.

She learned the story about four hours before noon—the time for the execution—and at once made her way to the council hall, where in solemn silence waited the court and executioners. Chiquita pleaded that they spare her cousin. The plea was made to deaf ears. He had dealt the death blow to a Kiowa, and by their laws he had been tried and found guilty, and by their law he must suffer death.

“Where is he, that I may see him?” asked Chiquita.

“He has not returned.”

“He will come. A Ute does not fear the death that awaits him, even for a crime,” proudly asserted Chiquita. “The Great Manitou will send him back. Has he not danced to Wakantanka with a buffalo skull hung to a thong that passed through the flesh of his back? Will one who has danced to the Sun be afraid to return to the Kiowa dogs? Polar Bear knows that

the Utes would drive him back from the Happy Hunting Ground and be killed by them if he did not keep his promise to return. Polar Bear knows there is no escape."

"Chiquita is wise in what she says. The Kiowas know that Polar Bear has been a big brave and danced the awful Sun dance, but the hour is near at hand, and no word that he comes. What have we to insure his return, except the Indian's faith in the hereafter and that the Great Manitou will punish him in the Happy Hunting Ground if he disobeys the Kiowa Council and splits his heart with a lie when he promised to return?"

At this moment a shout was heard and a mounted runner quickly appeared, his horse covered with flecks of foam and nostrils deeply blowing.

"Polar Bear comes. He runs like the deer of the plains, when we lived in sight of the great mountains, the home of the Utes."

The council suspended all manifestations. The executioner examined his rifle. Polar Bear entered and bowed his head, then looked aloft and pointed to the sky.

"I am ready," was all he said.

The hour lacked ten minutes of the expired time. The executioner motioned and Polar Bear followed. Under a large oak he took his stand, stripped to the

waist, a scarlet heart painted over his own. The executioner took his place, a few steps away, sighted his rifle at the painted heart, a puff of smoke, a sharp report, a gush of blood, and Polar Bear had atoned for his crime. Chiquita turned to Jack and asked :

“Is there another nation in the world where their criminals return of their own accord to suffer the death penalty?”

Most of the summer vacations of her college life Chiquita spent among the forests, crags and parks on the Ute reservation or in her mountain home near Middle Park. Hundreds of student friends visited her at the latter place and were entertained for weeks in a royal manner, to their great pleasure, a result which does not always follow the lavish expenditure of money. Tents, tepees, lodges, log cabins and quaint cottages were set apart for the use of the guests. A beautiful rustic chapel improvised for religious services and a hall for indoor entertainment were erected near the small hotel at the source of Rock Creek, where a famous iron and soda spring bubbles forth its sparkling waters of more than ordinary quality. The adjacent hills furnished abundance of deer, and even bear, and the famous catches of trout perpetuated the glory of a summer on Rock Creek as a lifelong realistic dream. The most elaborate of Indian trappings adorned the various abodes. Canoes silently sped

along the surface of an artificial lake made by repairing an old beaver dam, and in the corral Ute ponies, Mexican burros or American-bred saddle horses, besides traps, brakes and coaches presented a never-tiring array from which to select in order to make pilgrimages into more distant territory.

A little garden furnished fresh vegetables, while the "ranch hack" made trips to the nearest railway station for other provisions once a week. Chiquita arranged for the pre-emption of this ranch on one of Jack's early visits, but by reason of mineral springs being reserved by the Government from operation of the land law, the property was abandoned in later years.

In making her trips back and forth from the ranch on Rock Creek to the college, Chiquita watched the marvelous growth of that great stretch of country between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains with sinking heart.

To Jack she confided her worst fears. "The Great Manitou of the Utes has been conquered by the Great Spirit of the white man," she was wont to remark as her knowledge of the Christian religion advanced.

In truth, Chiquita had ground for her fears. Leadville, with its never ceasing output of silver which rolled in a continuous stream toward the great manufacturing centers of the East, was welcomed by the

idle, labor seeking armies as the Mecca of the world. The prominent transportation companies sent emissaries to all the great farming regions of Europe, colonizing emigrants to enter the immense uncultivated sections traversed by their respective charters in the attempt to make their railways profitable. Train load after train load of hardy, well-to-do Russians, Norwegians, Swedes and Germans rolled into the fertile valleys, peopling the arid wastes and starting the building of villages, towns and cities along the railway like unto tales of mythology. The impetus of this gigantic, overwhelming land-grabbing aroused the speculative world and money came forth from its hiding place to seek investment. Mills began to work overtime. Products of all kinds were in demand, for the comers to the new land had to be fed, clothed and entertained. Prosperity ruled.

"Jack," said Chiquita, as the annual trip was made across the great country to the mine near the close of her college career, "see the effects of education and civilization in these immense cities where ten years ago were unplowed lands, open prairie and treeless wastes. The untutored savage must go; yes, there is but one result can ensue, and while it makes me feel sad for my people yet I doubt not it is best for humanity."

CHAPTER XII.

JACK WEDDED.

'Twas the last of June, the wedding bells pealed joyously, the church organ bellowed noisily, the formality of congratulations followed along with the flutter of praises for the bride and groom, which they received because it was eminently proper and expected; a hurried breakfast, still more hasty good-byes, the whistle of an approaching train amid the excitement of baggage checked, lost or forgotten, a rush of depot farewells, a waving of handkerchiefs, a few misty eyes, then Hazel had a chance to breathe a long sigh of relief and Jack to unburden some pent-up adjectives as he picked rice out of his wife's hair and removed the tell-tale labels, ribbons and signs which decorated umbrellas, suit cases and wraps.

"Jack," whispered Hazel, as she nestled close to him in the railroad coach in which was no one but an old man, the train attendant being on the platform. "I was 'skeert' until you squeezed my hand, and I trembled all over. I thought I should faint, but I'm your wife, ain't I, Jack?"

"Yes, you are an old married lady now," answered Jack, dogmatically.

"An old married lady," repeated Hazel slowly, lapsing into a brown study for a moment. "Jack, is it such an awful long time since I was a little girl and you pulled my sled on the hill for me?"

"No, dear, it is but yesterday and it will be yesterday always, even if we live for a hundred years. Don't you know, 'It's only once in life one's boots have copper toes,' and my 'copper-toed' age was the happiest part of my life."

"Until today, Jack," interrupted Hazel, very decidedly.

"Yes?" inquiringly replied Jack.

The time for Jack to make his regular visit to the mine had also been selected for his wedding trip and Chiquita was to join the newly married pair at Denver, then all three were to "do" Colorado, finishing by spending a few weeks in Estes Park and the Buena Vista ranch, as Chiquita called her wonderful summer abode, later going on to California. Jack had purchased a fine equipment of split bamboo fly rods and all the necessary accompaniments, while Hazel, equally ardent in her admiration of the sport so fascinating to the disciples of Izaak Walton, fashioned, with her own hands, elegant rod cases, fly books and natty garments for the outing. Conspicuous among the latter

was a short walking skirt and Eton jacket of brown duck, trimmed with bands of white and studded with brass buttons, in which she arrayed herself and practiced fly casting for imaginary trout on the lawn. A stop of an hour in Boston gave them barely time to transfer across the city of crooked streets to the Albany station and to settle themselves for the long ride to Chicago. Jack provided in advance for plenty of room, engaging a sleeper section.

By the time the train had shot past the beautiful suburban cities of Auburn and the Newtons and rolled into Framingham Mr. and Mrs. Sheppard were quite at home. They commenced to congratulate themselves on looking like old married folks and that no one would suspect them of being bride and groom.

"Jack, you know something?" said Hazel in her speculative way that always meant a favor to come.

"Well, sweetheart, what is it?" Jack presumed it was a glass of water or apples or that her pillow was not right.

"Well, you know."

Jack knew then that something more than ordinary was coming; that "you know" indicated not an uncertainty, but was the usual signal for a "hold up"—nothing short of opera tickets—and the young man wondered what unsatisfied desire was about to be "you knowed."

“Well, you know that little descriptive story you wrote of Estes Park, read it to me.”

So Mr. Jack resurrected the tale from its pocket in his suit case and in his rich, modulated voice, read the story for the x—th time, he thought:

“Peerless Estes! That miniature world wilderness of wonder and delight! Set apart for the tired brain and careworn wreck from the sepulchers of business activity! A sweet paradise nestled amidst the encircling snow-capped peaks whose somber heads rise far above the habitat of microbe and parasite. Those silent peaks silhouetted against an ethereal dome of deepest blue or blackest star-bespangled canopy of night! The mountain air of Estes; the elixir compounded by nature for reinvigorating battling civilization!

“This enchanted arena, which pen fails adequately to drape in poetical luxury, was dedicated for combats between rest and toil, health and sickness, vitality and decay. The angler revels in luxury with the numbers of easily accessible pools, riffles, meadows, cañons, the most distant an hour’s drive and the majority but ten minutes’ walk. Occasionally deer may be seen and the ‘Big Horn’ come down their aerial stairway from the clouds to lick from the alkali waters in Horseshoe. Wait until you see the chattering magpie, with its bronze equipment and saucy manners. The

foe of this long-tailed, noisy inhabitant is a blue jay (the one James Whitcomb Riley calls the 'bird with soldier clothes.') Hours may be spent witnessing the strategy, diplomacy, anger, spite and vindictiveness waged by these bird robbers and desperadoes, for both are notorious house breakers, murderers and thieves in bird land, as well as clever in appropriating kitchen supplies which they surreptitiously seize when opportunity is presented.

"In Estes a Sabbath quiet broods at all times, broken only by the swish of the angler's rod, the merry peal of frightened laughter as some maiden lands her first trout, or the crunching of horses' hoofs in the hard gravel roads as a pleasure party clatters by. Children romp and play without fear of mosquitoes or snakes, troublesome poisonous insects being banished as thoroughly as if destroyed by some mysterious necromancer.

"Where in all the world can the lover go"—

"Stop, Jack, look into the depth of my eyes and skip those charming nooks, bowers and rock girt dens where so many rehearse the preliminary episode which leads to the altar. I know that by heart; skip the 'lover' pages and read about the coach ride from Lyons, for we will get to Lyons Friday, won't we?"

So after a glass of water, an orange and readjusting of pillows, Jack picked up his book again.

“The ride from Lyons is so fraught with surprises that one becomes distracted. Situated as it is in a veritable fiery furnace of red, rough, ragged precipices, monuments of the eruptive age when volcanoes vomited billowy lava over the face of the earth, Lyons is the antithesis of what the traveler expected at the end of a tortuously curved railroad track, over which the ‘mixed’ train of freight and disgruntled humanity has been jerked, jostled and jumped along for about three hours, covering forty miles.

“But a delicious dinner awaits; generally fried chicken, southern style. This does not mean a sun dried remnant of a wing, or the active extremity of a leg with a burnt bone protruding through gristly skin, but a nice, big piece of a yellow-legged Plymouth Rock, the real article, hatched by a mother hen acquainted with the business and not one of those Illinois river incubators that furnish spring chickens at all seasons of the year to be kept well frozen in cold storage until called for. This chicken is fried in ranch butter to a golden russet brown, if you happen to know what color cooking calls for, and a whole lot of it comes in on one great big platter, so you get a chance to pick a good joint, but any part of such a chicken is good.”

“Jack, you are putting in a whole lot that is not in that book just to make me hungry. My mouth has

been puckered up for half an hour to get a bite of that 'yaller leg.' We are near Springfield; let's eat."

Suiting the action to the word they joined the motley throng in the rush for the dining-room, as the train came to a stop for forty minutes.

Fresh Connecticut River shad and roe, new green peas, new potatoes in cream, lettuce, radishes.

"There, that will kill your chicken fever for a time," said Jack, as he ordered for both.

"You may order me a piece of lemon pie, Jack. I see some on the sideboard and the meringue is about two inches thick."

"We want to go over and see the train for the north pull out; might see some Bozrah people, Hazel," said Jack, after the dinner, "it leaves five minutes before we do."

"Oh, sure enough, and there are a lot of students just going home. I suppose Chiquita is in Denver by this time."

"Hazel, there is old Deacon Petherbridge and Elam Tucker. I'll bet they've been down to New Haven on a horse trade. You know Elam had the big livery stable that burned down when you were eight and I was just eleven. You remember the Tucker boy was foolish and set fire to the hay, 'Wanted to see it burn,' he told the town marshal. But we must get aboard."

The last beams of rose-tinted sunlight percolated

through the gathering darkness as the train sped on its way, winding in and out among the hills of western Massachusetts. Hazel watched the fading panorama as it dissolved in the gloom of the night. She was thinking of her happy school days among those very hills through which she was now gliding, a one-day bride, wife of her childhood lover. As the scenes vanished she shyly snuggled a little closer and whispered, "Jack, we will always be happy, won't we?"

"Why, yes; but what made you ask it?"

"Oh, just 'cause," continuing, "I kinder wish we had gone around by Hoosac tunnel, we could have seen 'Old Bozrah' hills and"—

"I guess my new wife is a little homesick," consolingly interrupted Jack. "Suppose we visit Old Bozrah when we come back and have a famous time going nutting and picking autumn leaves"—

"And getting ivy poisoned so my face will be all spots next winter. I guess not."

The obsequious, ebony-hued gem'man, in white coat with black buttons, interrupted the first family differences.

"If yoh doan mind, I'd laik to fix up yoh section; got so much to do won't git through 'fore midnight."

"All right, where can we go? This one across here is unoccupied," replied Jack, wishing to accommodate.

"Dat section, sah, will not be taken until we neah

Albany, sah," came from the man of tips and corporation dignity.

They had been seated but a few moments when the occupant of the section next forward of their own was obliged to find temporary quarters as the ever-obliging servant of monopoly touched his cap for permission. A lady of prepossessing countenance, faultlessly gowned and of gracious manner, knocked, as it were, at Jack's door, addressing him, " May I occupy this vacant seat while the porter arranges my domicile? Pardon the intrusion, but all other avenues seem already taxed."

" Certainly, it is no intrusion; in fact, we shall be glad to have you, as you have had a long siege of solitaire," replied Jack.

" I do get so lonesome on my trips that I sometimes wish some one else had the position," answered the lady with that assurance which accompanies experience.

" Gathering from that, I judge you travel for business instead of pleasure," said Jack.

" Yes, I make two trips a year on business. I am buyer for Stoddersmith of Boston, and am on my way to Colorado and California. I shall visit Estes Park, Manitou and other points, then go to India and China."

Jack was no more surprised than if she had told him

she was quartermaster in the navy, or a field marshal in the German army. He looked incredulous. The lady handed him her card, which read, "Miss Asquith, Stoddersmith's, Boston," remarking that if it would be agreeable she would tell them how it happened a woman occupied so important a position, and naively added, "The only firm in the world who employs one of our sex in this department, even as a saleslady."

"Oh, do tell us," said Hazel, and to Jack, "Just think of a woman going alone to India to buy goods!"

"This trip is really a part of my twenty-fifth anniversary with the firm,"—

Hazel interrupted. "Pardon me, but do you mean to say you have been twenty-five years with one firm?"

"Yes, and I am but forty-five. I went to work, a girl of fifteen, in one of the then larger western cities and after five years concluded I would prefer an eastern house. New York did not offer the inducement which I found in Boston. I was placed in the fur stock in winter and lighter wraps in summer. For some reason, after I had been with them ten years, they transferred me temporarily into the present department, later returning me for one winter to the furs. At the end of that season I was given the option of management of the entire wrap stock or a permanent place in the other line. I preferred the latter. I did not feel confidence enough in myself to be a buyer.

You see, if certain styles of goods fail to 'go,' fail to become popular or to bring a good profit, there is a vacancy and a new buyer takes up the department. My sales in the new stock increased steadily. It became positively embarrassing to me at times when customers refused to have their wants attended to by the men in the stock, men who had been there many years longer than I had. But the fact was, it finally became necessary for me to make appointments just the same as dentists do in order to give the attention necessary to the trade. Three years ago I made my first attempt in buying from manufacturers in France. That trip was one continual round of 'stage fright,' and even after the goods were in the house I worried myself sick for fear the end of the season would be a 'blank,' as the boys say about lottery tickets, but the books showed a very profitable period in the face of grave reverses to the general trade. And now, to show their confidence in me as well as making me the magnificent present of a trip to India, I am on my way to buy goods. Isn't it lovely of them?"

"Well, you deserve it, even more if anything. Just imagine working for one firm a quarter of a century," spoke up Hazel very energetically.

"Many firms," said Jack, weighing his words, "send 'style hunters' abroad for the effect the mail from a foreign port has on their customers. Half the

time these 'hunters' stay long enough to mail their announcements, like as not printed in the United States, look at a few hats or garments, perhaps buy a 'pattern' or two, and then return home. Other firms do send buyers into various ports abroad. Some have resident buyers, but I never knew before of any firm sending a buyer from the ranks of the fair sex to the Orient. Let me compliment you, Miss Asquith, on your high achievement. It certainly demonstrates the advancement of woman's sphere. But may I ask you a pertinent question regarding the social part of your life?"

"Certainly, I can guess what you want to know, and let me say, at first, I used to feel dreadfully when I found that the working girl is to a great degree ostracised by what is called society. But I learned that society is treacherous. If one has lots of money to spend there are certain attractions that it takes money to enjoy or provide. The different degrees of wealth provide their respective scale of eligible members to make up their circle of society, and the lesser lights are eclipsed or paled into insignificance by the grander candle power. It is the same in business, professions, art and politics, so I found that my sphere was probably cast in just as pleasant places among my class of those who work for a living, as though I had been evolved by marriage or fortune into a society star of

any magnitude, where the jealousies and 'snubs' are even harder to be endured because of the still greater lustre found or imagined among more brilliant or exclusive sets into which I could not enter. Do I make it clear?"

"Very; indeed, you echo my own theory. But I could not have expressed it as clearly as you have," replied Jack.

"After all," continued Miss Asquith, "I doubt if the very rich obtain as much unalloyed pleasure from life as do the middle classes who do not aspire to greatness and are educated from infancy to make themselves happy in the strata to which they are indigenous, as one may put it. They are free to come and go any and everywhere, while the wealthy commence life in charge of a nurse girl, are educated by private tutors, attended by chaperones in their courtship and graduate simply to be put in charge of the butler, footman, coachman and maid. But I guess I have worn you out with my sermon on riches, and will say good night."

Hazel and Jack joined in their good night and discussed the subject some time, deciding to ask Miss Asquith to meet Chiquita and the four go as one party to Estes Park. As Hazel said, "It will give Chiquita a grand chance to study another phase of the life of her white sister, and, Jack, I guess the red man's

squaw is not alone in the field of drudgery, after all."

Owing to through tickets having been procured, it became necessary for Jack to go one route while Miss Asquith took another from Chicago to Denver, arrangements being made to that end the day following. Jack had to get his tickets viséd at the Chicago office and for some technical reason the matter was of such a nature that it required the O. K. of the General Passenger Agent. As he awaited an audience, the official being for the moment engaged with another person, evidently a stranger to city methods and customs, Jack struggled with a long forgotten, dimly familiar something about the man that recalled brain impressions, which they say are never destroyed when once imprinted. He had been directed to see Mr. Lillis at such a room, in such a building, but that name carried no suggestion. It did not seem to fit the groping fancy of his mind. Still the name seemed to associate itself with the party then engaging the General Passenger Agent. As the stranger turned to go he stopped in front of Jack, looked at him a moment, then put out his hand, "Shake, old man; guess you don't re-cog-nize Cal Wagner in his store clothes. I jess cum out to God's country once more afore I pass in my chips to see how things look in civilization. How be ye?"

Of course Jack then remembered his quondam friend during the races on the Ute reservation, and the name Lillis puzzled him more than ever. He greeted Cal in a hearty manner, introducing Hazel.

"Wait a minute while I get my tickets fixed, then I'll have a chat with you," said Jack.

As he presented his tickets, stating the object of his errand, he noticed the official had a glass eye and scar near his ear. When the tickets were returned a name written across them identified so unmistakably a part of Jack's "vision" that he immediately recalled the story which Cal Wagner told him years before of the first grave in Silver Cliff. The name was "Bert Lillis." Allowing his curiosity to prevail, he asked abruptly, "Mr. Lillis, were you ever in Silver Cliff?"

The official started, a shiver ran through his frame, the color left his face until it was like a piece of Parian marble, while he replied just audibly, helplessly, "Yes," adding quickly, "Come in, I guess you must know. I—did you ever see me before?"

Jack shook his head, but turning to Cal said, "Cal, this is Bert Lillis, formerly of Silver Cliff."

Cal looked from one to the other and replied, "Guess you are mistaken. Lillis is dead many years."

"No, he is still alive," said the official. "Come in."

Upon being seated, no one seemed desirous of

broaching the painful subject uppermost in their minds, while Hazel was completely mystified as to the conduct of the three men. Finally, with a great effort to restrain his feelings, his head bowed upon his breast, the railroad man said in broken sentences: "I—for fifteen years a blackened pall has shadowed my path, a floating, abandoned derelict moored to my heart has dragged me against the buffeting waves of the sea of life or held me helpless in the trough as storm crests broke over me in my misery. A man marked with the brand which God placed upon Cain for the murder of his brother, yet I was exonerated by the jury. I shot Les McAvoy in the discharge of my duty. I was a mere boy, without money, scantily clad, in search of wealth with which to support my mother, and had to accept the only opportunity presented in that lawless mining camp. I had no tools or trade and was not strong enough to do the work required of miners, and the camp had not advanced far enough to give employment to the ordinary run of commercial wage earners. It was instilled into me in early life to do my duty in whatever capacity I served, under all circumstances, and I considered it my duty to protect that gambling table even at the risk of my own life. The years of mental anguish which I have lived since that fatal moment, and the years which my poor old mother has had her head bowed in sorrow"—

"Wait a moment, Mr. Lillis," interrupted Cal.
"You did not kill Les McAvoy."

"What is that—you say I did not? Oh! I wish—it is good of you to try to erase the stigma, but the evidence, the facts, the coroner's verdict, 'at the hands of Bert Lillis.' Oh, no, no"—sadly commented Lillis.

"Mr. Lillis, I will prove to you what I say is truth, and if the grave of Les McAvoy has remained untouched all these years, the evidence is in the coffin," replied Cal.

"Tell it! tell it! prove, first, that you were there; describe the scene"—

"You were dealing, you raised a Colt's old-fashioned, powder-and-ball navy six-shooter from yer lap"—

"Yes, I had cleaned up that old gun and loaded it with fresh powder, ball and new caps that day. They told me to"—interrupted Mr. Lillis.

"Sam Tupper sat in a chair on top of a dry-goods box; he was lookout. A man with mustache, dead black, like India ink. Les did not like your remarks and started to rise up in his chair, his hand goin' to his pistol pocket. You lifted that big Colt's with both hands and as soon as the muzzle of it was pintin' up and away from your own body you pulled the trigger. Les had his own weapon out; you saw it, was frightened, dropped your own gun and tried to slip under

the table. As you went down Les placed the muzzle of his gun agin yer eye and cut loose. While this was goin' on Tupper never moved until he saw a chanst to open a drawer, grab a pearl-handled, silver-plated shootin' iron. He stood up, advanced one step, and fired downwardly at Les McAvoy's breast. Les writhed, turned completely around, his hand convulsively endeavoring to get an aim at Tupper, who stood with a malicious grin waiting for McAvoy again to face him, ready to fire again if need be, but he saw it was useless. As McAvoy finally pivoted, the pistol dropped to the floor, and with a crash he fell flat on his back, dead. You were under the table. Tupper stepped from the box, his six-shooter a smokin' and said, 'You got it that time,' then put the gun in his pocket."

"Where were you?" exclaimed Mr. Lillis.

"Right agin the wall, and McAvoy's head struck at my feet. One man saw this besides myself. He wore three gold nuggets on his shirt front, and me and him figgered it out that night and again the next morning, but mum was the word. We knew the gamblers would kill us both if we told what we seen. I left the place and returned just as the last testimony was being given. There was no evidence given of Tupper having fired a shot. As the body lay upon its side on the floor there was one wound in the breast

near the left center. Just under the skin in the small of the back was a dark, cone-shaped substance. It was the lead bullet from that pearl-handled six-shooter. The round bullet from your Colt's navy went through the roof."

"Gentlemen," said Lillis, "I am now able to relieve my mind from this hideous vision, and it will bring happiness to my mother. I can see now why the gamblers removed me to Rosita and furnished me with transportation and money to leave Colorado when I recovered sufficiently to travel. The ball from McAvoy's pistol caught the lower portion of my eye, and the turning of my head just before he fired caused the bullet to pass out near my ear, instead of going into my brain."

"We must go now, as it is near train time," said Jack.

"Me, too," said Cal.

"Are you going west?" asked Jack.

"Same train you take, I guess," replied Cal.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Lillis, "I regret you leave so soon. I would like to entertain you if you care to stay over. If not now, at some future time; and, Mr. Wagner, you have done me a great favor. My poor old mother can live the rest of her life peacefully. Good-bye! good-bye!"

As the train pulled out of the station on the way

to Denver the principal topic of conversation was the remarkable coincidence of the rencounter of Jack and Cal, emphasized by the more remarkable meeting of Cal and Bert Lillis.

“ Well, that beats me,” said Cal.

“ I’ve got another surprise in Denver for you,” said Jack.

“ Will it beat this one? ”

“ Wait until you see our old friend, Chiquita.”

“ Chiquita, the injun gal? ” asked Cal, inquiringly.

“ Yes, Yamanatz’s daughter.”

CHAPTER XIII.

ESTES PARK.

The renewal of the acquaintance between Jack and Cal was an opportune one. As each unfolded his past and expectations for the future there seemed to be a bond of mutual sympathy form unlike the ordinary friendships.

“Jack,” said Cal, confidentially, “I have laid up a good pile of ‘dust’ and got as likely a ranch outfit as any of ‘em. I ain’t so much on talk as some fellers with slippery tongues, neither is any one going to get the worst of it as they do what deals with some of them slippery talkers. When Cal says a thing’s so, it’s so, just as sure as gun’s made of iron. Now, I’m git-tin’ on in years, an’ git lonesome as a settin’ hen without airy egg. I ain’t a pinin’ away, but I would like to gin some desarvin’ woman a good home. I’d kinder like to live in Denver and have a house up among them nabobs. I don’t expect that big red stone quarry is goin’ to give out right away and I just as lieve as not use some of it to build a decent mansion.



THE "KEYHOLE," LONG'S PEAK, 13,000 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL.

Then I've got a few thousand steers;—they's one bunch of eighteen hundred fat ones, every one of them beef to the heels, true Herefords, got the Hereford mark, that will run twelve to fourteen hundred pounds apiece, and prime beeves are good as cash anywhere. I think that bunch of steers ought to provide a pretty good place to live in as long as the stone don't cost nothin'."

Cal stopped and looked curiously at Jack, who was looking curiously at him.

"You are not so awful poor. Been about fifteen years making it?" asked Jack musingly.

"Well, longer than that. I took up that stone ranch twenty years ago. Never thought much of it until Denver got into the buildin' boom and some feller was cartin' away my red rock without asking—the cattle, well in freightin' and ranchin' I run onto many a 'maverick' durin' the spring round-ups, then some young tenderfoot would get a rich uncle to stake him; but when one of them March blizzards struck his weavin', staggerin', half-famished bunch he would get sick and be glad to turn over his travelin' bone-yard for a couple of hundred or less, an' I kept addin' to 'em until I got into raisin' nothin' but thorough-breds," answered Cal.

"Let me tell you something, Cal. I'll put you onto the right track and if you can't manage to do the right

thing at the right time, you'll have to live in that red house by yourself, see?"

"I savvey."

Hazel commenced to smile. She had joined in the general conversation until Cal got sentimental, but when Jack joined forces with the honest man of the plains who acknowledged to picking up "mavericks," although she did not know what they were, still she felt that it was some "get something for nothing" scheme and she was afraid Jack might acquire bad habits; then she was inclined to resent any effort on the part of Mr. Jack to become a promoter of some matrimonial enterprise, so she smiled and sententiously remarked: "I guess you need not bind yourself to deliver any foreign goods for domestic purposes, free of charge, Mr. Jack."

"Now listen, my dear," said Jack. "Wait until you learn what's trumps before you tip your hand. I'm going to invite Cal to go with us to Estes Park. He can be so useful to me, you know, if I want to go out for a deer hunt; then he can pilot Miss Asquith over the big rocks when I have my arms full attending to you," said Jack, with a merry twinkle.

"Oh, ho! so it is Miss Asquith you seek to waylay, is it? Well, that is different. Say, I guess I'll have to throw up my hand. I have no trumps! success to you."

Cal laughed, Jack made merry over the prospect, and Hazel could not help being amused at the deliberate plot to kidnap a woman's heart who had for twenty-five years earned her own living.

"Cal, there is a Miss Asquith going to meet us in Denver and join us on a trip to Estes Park. Just you come along and help me take care of the ladies. You have nothing on hand and you will enjoy the trip anyway. Now that is all I want. If you get tangled up in any foolishness"—

"Now mind, if I do go, and get half a chance I'll stake a claim sure as gun's made of iron," jokingly remarked Cal. "I will have to go to the ranch first: I'll stop off at Hugo and be in Estes in a few days. I'll find you all right," so Jack and Hazel continued alone on their journey.

"Say, Jack," said Hazel, after Cal left them, "what a joke it would be if Mr. Wagner should marry Miss Asquith."

"Why shouldn't he? Of course she is much better educated; he has the gruff ways of the rich frontiersman, but he is rich and not so much older than she is. He will give her an elegant home, where he will be like the historic 'bull in a china shop.'"

"Just what was in my mind," interrupted Hazel. "Do you remember she said two or three times, joking, of course, 'I don't see why I never could find a

farmer who would take pity on me.' " Both laughed heartily at such a prospect. The long, dusty ride over sand hills, through dreary, brown sunburned cattle ranges from Cheyenne Wells to Hugo and Hugo to the end of their journey, finally came to an end. The welcome snow-capped peaks freshened the superheated atmosphere and Denver with all its wealth, health and climate was reached. It did not take long for Jack and Hazel to find Chiquita, and within an hour or two Miss Asquith arrived. They were in a mood to enjoy all the sights of the big city of the plains; but what chiefly impressed the new visitors was the clearness of the air, the bracing, inspiring vigor which it imparted, and the absence of that after-math, which always followed exercise in the lower altitudes on the lakes or sea coast.

The slow dragging, mixed train deposited its burden in Lyons just as the book said it would, and the red volcanic rocks baked them, and the "yaller legged" chicken, in all its delicious russet brown jacket, was served to the hungry quartet, who renewed their grumbling on the park hack as the driver cracked his whip and the wheels crunched their way through the deep hot sand. Slowly the great vehicle groaned along for perhaps a mile, when a sudden turn in the road brought them to a bridge which spanned a clear sparkling stream, and the ascent of the first

lofty foothills was begun. Eyes brightened, ejaculations of surprise and delight followed each other in rapid succession as "Johnnie" cracked his whip and dexterously guided the now thoroughly contented coachful of pleasure seekers along a narrow ledge, winding around some precipice or taking a run down some steep declivity that caused the timid to shriek and the blood to tingle in the more reckless. Up, nearer and nearer the sky, ever leaving the top of the next hill below them, until the summit was reached.

Coats that had been discarded because of the heat were resumed, light wraps were called for by the ladies, and the descent towards the Park commenced. Great stretches of pine forest fringed the barren rocks on some of the long ridges, while on others a chaotic interwoven mass of tangled "dead wood" silently proclaimed the terrible devastation of the devouring mountain fire.

As the first view of the Park greeted the travelers, a merry shout rent the air, the coach pulled up at the side of the toll road and everybody alighted to "stretch," get out still heavier wraps, and make ready for the remaining four hours' ride. Hazel had exhausted her supply of English suitable for the occasion, while Jack and Chiquita enjoyed the attempts of Miss Asquith to do the subject justice in "shop" words.

Even the heavier wraps were none too warm as the coach reached the foot of the last incline and rolled easily over the hard, gritty, well kept turnpike. The meadow stretched before them, the Big Thompson easily distinguished in its center and the unbroken line of mountains walling up to the sky, shut them out from the noisy world which lay just beyond Long's Peak, whose snow-white night cap was then a mass of burnished copper from the last rays of the setting sun.

"Oh, Jack, how supremely grand," was all Hazel ventured.

"It is just lovely," murmured Miss Asquith.

The great triangle sent forth its warning that dinner was waiting, and reluctantly they entered the house where the warmth of a little wood fire took the chill off the crisp air.

"Think of it, 90 degrees in Chicago yesterday, today a fire to warm the house!" exclaimed Hazel.

"It is just lovely," said Miss Asquith.

"Dinner," shouted a white-aproned darky.

A great platter of deliciously browned brook trout stood appetizingly in the center of a round table, and the four chairs were immediately occupied by four hungry people, who waived all ceremony, as well as the every day stereotyped roast beef, making trout the Alpha and Omega of their first Estes Park repast.

The sight-seeing was begun at daybreak, Jack routing out his party in order to see the sunrise and the dissolving mists which hung low on the mountain sides as they disappeared beneath the warming influence of old Sol. An early breakfast was followed by unpacking of trunks, arranging of fishing tackle, cameras, hammocks and paraphernalia which they disposed of in and about the four-room cottage near the main hostelry. Great elk and deer antlers decorated buildings all about them and the emblem of occupancy was the fly rod standing in some convenient corner. Saddle horses, phaetons and four-seated spring wagons were standing about, chartered for the day's outings, while already on the banks of the streams were anglers casting their favorite flies over pool, riffle and swirl, in expectant anticipation of luring the wary, ever alert inhabitant which lurked beneath some rock or bank. A flash of something like light, followed by the straightening of a line, the symmetrical curve of a split bamboo, the sharp click of a swiftly revolving reel in crescendo as the line cleft the water, then the lull, the renewed dash for liberty as a spotted, open mouthed one-pounder madly threw himself from the water, shaking his head and falling with a splash back into the stream,—the critical moment,—but the barb holds and a limp, pink tinted trout, with extended

gills, floats easily into the landing net—a prize is captured which proves the record breaker of the day, all within sight of the “tavern.”

Day after day excursion followed exploration; fishing in Willow Park or Horseshoe, the cañon and the “pool,” over on the St. Vrain and the meadow; in the latter place as the season advanced one becomes familiar with the finny tenant who has outwitted all the temptations of professional angling, and many an hour can be spent devising new deceptions with which to entice the sagacious big ones, those who have felt the keen thrust of a barbed hook and learned not to grab every dainty morsel floating near its den. Few captures of the landlords of the meadow stream are recorded.

Among the tourists were numbers of English members of the nobility, and in fact a great portion of the Park was the property of a well-known lord, whose representative entertained his lordship's friends. The grand herd of Hereford cattle grazing in the park belonged to the English lord, as well as many of the blooded horses found at the corral.

Just a week after Jack had tested his ability attending to the caprices of a bride and his two proteges, they were all resting in easy chairs or in the hammocks, awaiting the arrival of the stage from Lyons, when a pair of handsome brown horses, flecked with

foam, swung into view, drawing a buckboard in which sat a lonesome traveler leading a beautiful roan saddle pony. It was Cal, and as he greeted Jack, who had advanced to meet the outstretched hand, he said, "I thought perhaps I'd run across a 'maverick' up here."

Jack understood and replied, "Glad you come prepared to put your brand on any that you catch in the round up."

As they were instructing the corral men what to do with the horses Miss Asquith said to Hazel, "Oh, Mrs. Sheppard, isn't that a stunning turnout? I guess it must be my rich farmer." To which Hazel nodded assent, remarking through her smiles, "There's no telling."

Chiquita joined in the merriment with a suggestion, "Suppose, Miss Asquith, you let me get some Indian lovers' ferns and you dry them, then crush them with your own hands while you chant some lines which one of the great Sachems, in time long ago, obtained from a good spirit; and the good spirit promised the great Sachem that any of his maidens could cause an obstinate lover to woo her, or make a recreant spouse return to the side of his love if the maiden or wife would mix some of the ferns with some killikinnick, so the object of solicitude would smoke himself into her presence."

"Oh! That is just lovely. I think I would rather have one smell kind of smoky any how. I just abominate these scrupulously clean men who saturate the atmosphere with Jockey Club; it is too much like 'shop.' Ugh!"

"Sh!" said Hazel, "they are coming. Welcome, Mr. Wagner, and here is a poor unfortunate, Mr. Wagner, who is on her way to China; she says she is going to bring back a Chinaman or die in the attempt—Miss Asquith."

"You need not go to China for 'em. I've got one down at the ranch that I'd just as lieve swap as not."

"Is he the genuine article with a dragon on his blouse?" retorted Miss Asquith. "I am pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Wagner."

"Thanks; and, Chiquita, who would have thought it? You here, and, well, this beats me," turning to Jack, who was enjoying the scene.

"My surprise I promised you," said he.

"Surprise, well I should say so, sure as gun's made of iron, but tell me—"

"I'll tell you myself," broke in Chiquita. "Yamanatz's daughter has been to college for the last six or eight years. Chiquita has adopted the life of her white sisters." She said it rather regretfully, Cal thought, but he replied:

"The flower of the Utes is a daisy, sure as gun's made of iron."

"Now, Mr. Wagner, that is not fair; you might have said something nice about me," playfully remarked Miss Asquith.

"I suppose I never will be forgiven for such a lack of good manners," said Cal, continuing in that open-hearted off-hand way, "but let me tell you how I will even up. Tomorrow morning you shall ride that roan for me and the rest of us will trail along behind and take your dust, for that horse is a thoroughbred."

Just then the dinner gong sounded. The party planned an outing at Horseshoe Falls, Chiquita and Miss Asquith, with Cal as escort, all mounted, while Jack and Hazel drove in the buckboard, carrying supplies and fishing tackle. Ten miles over a hard, sandy road, a couple of hours' fishing, lunch in camp fashion, then an hour's rest and return to the hotel. Miss Asquith was a trifle timid at first, but she was not a novice and soon proved well able to master her mount, although he was spirited and inclined to test his powers against all comers. But she could not catch trout. Cal, of course, found it necessary to spend most of his time extricating her line from the limbs of trees or driftwood in the stream and changing the flies.

He showed her when and how to let the sombre hued gray hackle or gaudy "royal coachman" settle daintily along the riddle, or drop a "black gnat" from a bunch of grass on the opposite bank as though it was

a sure enough bug. But the lady in search of a Chinaman could not hook the lord of the water. She was either too slow or too quick, and the exasperating ineffectual attempts to capture one *little one* of the many that rose to the bait, took it with a rush only to drop it instantly, or the ones even darting out of the water as she lifted her flies too quickly, wore her patience to a frazzle. In fact, after losing one grand fellow that she had managed to hold for just an instant before he broke her leader, she was fairly upset and could not keep back the tears of disappointment.

"Now, little one, you must not give up that way," Cal expostulated. "These pesky fellows are just like lightning. Let me see if I can't get that one. Now watch my fly as it goes into the dark shadow by that tree and I will skitter the second fly sort of dancing-like diagonally across the lower corner of the swirl that makes over that sunken rock—Gee, whiz! I've got him, and see, there is another just grabbed the second fly. Now the trick is to let them fight it out among themselves while I hold this end of the argument. Two are not so hard to 'whip' as one if you keep your line just easy tight as they are pulling against each other all the time. But we will have to go down by that little beach where I can wade out with a landing net; the tail fly being down stream, the farthest will drop into the net first, then I let the other float in on top of him, see?"

"I don't care, I think it is real mean I can't catch one," replied Miss Asquith, "but oh, ain't they pretty?"

"Guess they are half pounders, perhaps the biggest will go three quarters," said Cal, as he adjusted the "shrinker," a little spring scale which he took from his pocket. "Nine ounces and fourteen ounces, larger than I thought they were," said Cal, as he placed them in his creel. "I guess we'd better be moving towards the camp, and as we go I will tell you one secret of catching trout. As your flies settle into the water, pull against them easy all the time as though they were fastened to something, a good deal like 'feeling a horse's mouth' when driving. This seeming tension, while infinitesimal, is enough that when a trout grabs the fly he can not drop it; and when you feel the 'tug,' instead of jerking your line out of the water turn your hand over and upward a little. This will set the hook deep, then land your catch—if you can."

"Oh, yes, it is easy enough to say it," replied Miss Asquith.

The camp was soon reached and a gay party discussed the two "big ones" at dinner upon their arriving at the hotel.

"There are very few trout caught in the Park that exceed a pound, and more six ounces or less than in excess of six," said Cal. "The large three to eight

pound red throated mountain trout are more plentiful in the waters that empty into the Pacific Ocean or Rio Grande River than in the streams that go to the North Platte and on into the Missouri River."

Trips of this nature and exploration tours followed each other day after day, until all the country had been visited.

One trip which Jack deferred was to Long's Peak, and as day succeeded day he was conscious that his little party cast longing glances toward that snow-capped, uncompromising sentinel of the plains. So few ventured to undertake the fatigue incident to the wearisome and perilous journey that little was heard of the experiences, and those who did accomplish it seemed loath to recount much of their experience. When the signs in the zodiac at last became propitious, and all were physically and morally equal to the attempt, preparations were made to go to the Half Way house, Lamb's ranch, and the next morning, at four o'clock, make an early start to climb the peak. No fishing tackle was carefully stowed away, no odds wagered on results, and no great amount of unrestrained merriment attended the "make ready" as wraps, lunches, heavy ironshod walking sticks and sundry necessities were packed into the vehicles. Three good saddle ponies of the Indian variety were provided for the ladies, while Jack and Cal made

arrangements to get their saddle animals at Lamb's. The road to the Half Way house was of the usual rough thoroughfare, corduroyed in places, steep and fringed with pine trees, whose uncanny whisperings added to an already semi-funereal gloom which hung oppressively over the party. This was partially due to the impressive monosyllabic advice given in low voices by guides, hostlers and residents of the park.

After a restless night, just as the gray dawn of morning was breaking through the eastern sky, the lengthening and shortening of stirrups, changing of packs, wrapping up bundles of extra clothing and other miscellany occupied the time while breakfast was being prepared. With a good-bye to those who remained at the ranch, a cavalcade of a dozen, including guides, started away in the crisp, frosty air, each one eager to be in the lead, and on the return each one was contented to be the drone. The sun was perhaps two hours high when timber line was reached. Frequent stops for breathing had to be made and saddle girths adjusted as higher altitudes and steeper grades were encountered. The inexperienced noted the panting horses, but did not fully grasp the terrific effort required to climb those precipitous inclines at eleven thousand feet above sea level. Not a cloud, not a particle of haze blurred the clear atmosphere. The pines soughed dreamily and waved their needle tipped

arms in a lazy, indolent manner, wafting fragrance and vigor to the world. The trail wound its serpentine way around hill after hill toward the monster peak, standing cold and aloof, riveted, as it were, to the deep blue firmament against which it seemed to rest. As the sky was approached nearer and nearer, the vegetation grew sparse and stunted. Coarse rye grass in clumps few and far between gave evidence of nature's provision, even at that altitude, for wandering deer or elk that might be left behind when the great winter migration of the restless bands sought the lower regions. Great boulders appeared more frequently and the trail led the party over slide rock a great portion of the way. The squeaks of conies and shrill whistles of groundhogs could be distinguished above the clatter of horses' hoofs, for timber line is their home.

At last the trees were left behind, the great boulder bed stretched before them, an ocean of waste rock, formidable, repellant, uninviting. The "Key Hole" was plainly visible, two miles distant, while the summit of the peak towered far above, almost over them. Horses were lariatied, saddles taken off, and lunches stowed into pockets, the stout iron pointed sticks were brought into service and the signal given, "Onward." The way at first was over soft grassy spots interspersed between the waves of rocks, here and there a

scrawny runt of a pine tree, looking more like roots growing needles than a tree, beneath the shelter of which the famous ptarmigan, or mountain quail, kept lonely vigil.

The last vestige of verdure passed, the immensity of that vast area of huge, desolate, dreary waste of rock appalls the mind. Step by step, up, up, over those ever increasing boulders, it did not seem like mounting higher and higher, but as though one was in a gigantic, fearful stone tread mill and the earth gradually sinking away, down, down, into space below. After the boulder bed, the snow, hard, crusty, firm enough to bear a horse. The "Key Hole"—and as the party passed through to the eastern slope, they found spread out beneath their feet the dry, dusty plain, with its brown coat of grass and alkali, stretching away into nothing. A venture to the edge of an immense great rock upon which one could lie down and gaze into the depth below was like looking into eternity, the contemplation of which baffles the mind for words to describe the awesome, fearful grandeur of God's handiwork as viewed from Long's Peak. No other peak so barren, no other peak so lonesome, no other peak so supernaturally devoid of at least one redeeming feature as Long's. From its barren crest one seems able to touch the sky, and one bound into space would land him beyond the world.

To the right could be seen Denver, there the Platte River, Longmont in a maze of alfalfa beds and wheat fields, but these were as a drop of water to the ocean, a grain of sand to the plains. A hasty lunch, dry indeed, but for the accommodating snow bank which leaked enough to furnish ice water that coursed in a stream about the size of the lead in a pencil down a boulder, which dwarfed Cheops' pyramid. The labor involved in the return trip caused dejection and woe. Lameness was the rule and only after much coaxing, and threatening, could every one understand the peril which awaited them, once the night settled down before the boulder beds were crossed.

Just below the "Key Hole" the guide conducted the party to a wooden slab standing unpainted, weatherbeaten, bearing this inscription:

Here
Carrie J. Welton
Lay to Rest
Died Alone
Sept. 28-1884.

It was in a spot at the base of the "Key Hole" where the rocks stood on end and seemed to disappear into the boulders, that made up that vast boulder bed. From a prayer book, which Jack carried, he read the following tale of the awful tragedy:

PERISHED ALONE.

From the Half Way House at break of day
A maiden gaily strode away,
To climb the heights of Long's Peak bold,
With guide to show the trail, I'm told;
For there's no path and the way is steep,
And death lurks 'round that grim old peak.

'Twas at the dawn of an autumn morn,
The pine trees soughed as if to warn
As two climbed o'er the boulder bed.
"Come back! The storm! 'Twill come," he said.
"On to the summit," she made reply.
"Why need we falter, you and I?"

Then upward climbed to view the sight
Of raging storm on Long's Peak height,
And saw ambition's fixed star
On guard, within the gates ajar,
Lest mortal man should enter in
Before absolved from venial sin.

The solitude of those drear crests
No welcome gives to lingering guests
When storm king vies with mid-day sun
In battle, 'til the conquered one
Retreats for days, perhaps for weeks,
And gloom reigns o'er the lonely peaks.

The wild wind shrieked as in snow and hail
They undertook the downward trail.
She brav'd the cold and murmured not,
As they groped their way from spot to spot;
Her wondrous strength succumbed at last
While yet the "Keyhole" must be passed.

The stalwart guide in his arms then bore
Her fragile form, and ponder'd o'er

The waste of rocks beneath the "Key;"
For his strength was failing rapidly,
And night clouds dimm'd the tortuous way
Which few e'er tread e'en at mid-day.

"You may go for help," she moaned at last,
As through the "Key" they slowly pass'd.
"The rocks will shelter me," she said,
And sank to rest on the boulder bed.
He covered her with the coat he wore,
Then hastened to the "Half Way" door.

Another dawn of an autumn morn
In the eastern sky had been born,
As stalwart guides, with throbbing heads,
Toiled wearily o'er the boulder beds;
'Midst cruel crags and waist-deep snow
They battled on against the foe.

Up, up, they climb'd that dreadful night
And brav'd the storm on Long's Peak height;
Yet wild winds shrieked as heads were bow'd
To gaze with awe at the snowy shroud
In which she slept on her boulder bed.
"She lay to rest,—she's gone," they said.

"Oh, dear, isn't it sad?" said Hazel and Miss
Asquith in a breath.

"She died alone?" queried Cal.

"Yes, sir," spoke up a guide, "both of us would
have perished, but she was true grit to the last. I
thought she might hold out, but the storm grew worse
as it grew darker."

"Do you have such awful storms as early as Sep-
tember?" asked Hazel.



"SHE LAY TO REST," ON HER BOULDER BED.

"Sometimes the first winter blizzards are pretty rough up here; generally get a starter any time after the middle of September," answered another guide.

"We had better be moving," said Jack.

"One moment, please. Would you mind giving me a copy of those verses when we get to the ranch? I would like to show them to visitors," said the guide.

"Certainly, certainly; why, just take the prayer book. We will all put our names in here right now and you can keep it to remember us by," replied Jack.

The dragging of swollen feet, weary bodies and aching limbs back over that two miles of desolation was full of torture for all. The expected relief when the horses were reached proved but an additional multiplicity of aches, especially in the joints of the knees, where it seemed as though iron pins were crunching the very cavities of those valuable adjuncts to man's usefulness.

azel cried, Chiquita even complained, and poor Miss Asquith,—well, Cal had his hands full. He showed his frontier gallantry by picking her up and carrying her down one steep grade as though she were but an infant, and the episode did more to reinvigorate the dejected spirits of the entire party than anything that could have happened.

Nevertheless the Half Way house welcomed a hungry, cross, disgruntled aggregation of mountain climbers.

Said Jack as the guide bid him good-bye, "Don't you ever get tired of seeing these peak scalers come near the place? They are all alike on the home stretch, if they are able to stand up at all."

"I must say I do. I wouldn't care if no one ever again wanted to make that fool climb. Why, that senseless trip has often put folks to the bad for months. They can ride up Pike's Peak, but they don't know what climbing is until they tackle that old fellow. Well, adios; I'll say this much, you've been the jolliest party this season."

It was nine o'clock when the hotel was reached, and it was noon of the next day before a lot of crippled tourists managed to limp into the dining room, leaving a trail of arnica and pain killers everywhere they went.

"Oh, isn't this just lovely," said Miss Asquith, as Cal rolled her in an invalid chair to her place at the table.

It was a couple of days before the effects of the Long's Peak trip abated to a degree that recreation once more became a pleasure. During the days of sight seeing and exploration of Estes Park, Chiquita had opportunity to study the character of the saleslady depicted by Miss Asquith, but she had little chance to talk with the lady on whom the years sat as easily as upon one in her teens, and whose viva-

cious temperament was contagious. The enforced respite gave plenty of time for recounting interesting episodes in Miss Asquith's life, which she did with charming grace.

To many, Miss Asquith seemed affected. The spontaneous spark of a jovial, witty disposition burned just as brightly in her at forty-five as it did a generation before, but the critic would not have it so. "It is put on, it is not natural, it is out of place; she had better be saying her beads preparatory to being buried," were some of the unkind remarks heard.

Hazel said to Jack, "She shocks one at first with her display of artlessness as a stock in trade, until you learn by experience that it is natural."

"I presume, my dear, there are people at eighty who condemn the 'kittenish' actions of some at ninety, the same as those of thirty criticise Miss Asquith. Is it envy?"

"I'll tell you, Chiquita," said the lady in question the day after the peak episode, "I find great enjoyment in being jolly, full of fun, possibly at times breaking all written rules of decorum and dignity; for why should we poor mortals go around with a long face, rigid arms and mouths full of pious ejaculations just because the Puritans brought that style from across the water? I have been doped on fashion for a quarter of a century, and fashions change, but in

that time I have learned that to laugh is to be with the world. To weep is to be alone. Better be a little frivolous with good appetite than strain at dignity and wail with dyspepsia. This etiquette and form is only skin deep any way."

"You are such a considerate little body I should have thought some enterprising man would have captured you years ago," ventured Chiquita.

"There was one, but he was stricken with fever and after that I never have had a desire to become married. Think I would like to run a ranch, though, now I am getting old and need some one to take care of me," she playfully added, causing a genuine ripple of merriment.

"Miss Asquith, you are all right," said Hazel. "Don't let these carping critics cause you to forego any fun there is in life, even to playing tag with a cattle king," which, of course, produced another burst of laughter.

"I shall have to insist upon your accompanying us to 'Buena Vista,' Miss Asquith. I think you can spare the time and positively we can not get along without you," said Chiquita.

"I shall have to give up that pleasure. I must go on my journey." The reply was rather sad, but she quickly recovered her usual vivacity. "I want another trial at those fish. I suppose I will have to leave Saturday, and this is Wednesday—"

"Well, well, who are these girls conspiring against now?" said Cal, as he drove up with Jack.

"We have just talked Miss Asquith to death and tried to get her to go with us to 'Buena Vista.' You will go, won't you, Cal?" said Chiquita.

"Oh, you bet, I'd never lose such an opportunity. Guess you will change your mind, Miss Asquith. In fact we will have to take you prisoner."

"I want to catch a fish before I leave Estes. Now, be good and go down in the meadow and tie one somewhere to the bank so I can find it," banteringly replied Miss Asquith.

"We will go Friday and I pledge the fish, a big one," said Cal.

Seated upon the beautiful roan pony, Miss Asquith, followed by Cal, went to the meadow Friday afternoon, while the others lolled in hammocks around the hotel. The sky was just the least bit clouded and a warm south wind blew lazily across the park. A few fingerlings had been lifted from the riffles when Miss Asquith headed her pony into deep water up stream at a big bend where the river was sixty feet wide. Cal was busy whipping the eddies farther down. As her pony was well trained to the angling pastime, he knew almost as well as his rider what was wanted. Stepping slowly along until the water reached his belly the pony stopped, Miss Asquith's flies flashed behind, then she

gracefully dropped the leader far over the stream to the other shore.

"Oh, dear," she exclaimed, "they have gone too far and caught in the grass. How—how will I ever—"

Just then the tail fly dangled down to the surface of the water, held back by the droppers, which were caught in the grass ever so lightly. The top of something darted from under the bank and seized the fly. Miss Asquith thought it was a muskrat, it was so big. Down went the line deeper and deeper. She instinctively turned her hand and wrist in order to free the hooks from the grass, and thus set the fly good and deep into whatever was cavorting around, making her reel sing as she never had heard it before.

"Oh, Cal, quick! quick! come and get me," she called, little thinking what she was saying, at the same time pressing her knee against the side of the pony, who recognized the signal and turned toward the shore. Miss Asquith allowed her rod to hold steady until she could dismount. By that time Cal was at her side.

"You've got a beauty, sure as gun's made of iron," said he.

As she reeled in a little of the line the tension ceased and an immense trout broke from the water. "Oh! Oh! what shall I do?"

Cal spoke sternly, "Watch your line and don't be foolish."

With that she settled down to her work and in a few moments had the pleasure of floating the fish into the landing net, Cal wading out to intercept it. As it went into the net she stood on the bank just above him, a little beach giving him opportunity to make the capture. As he stood there holding on to the staff of his landing net with one hand and the line with the other, he said, "This trout is yours on one condition—the fish, the horse and the man all go together. Say yes, and the fish comes ashore, say no, and I turn him loose."

"Yes, yes, y-e-s. Hurry up with the fish," she exclaimed, adding excitedly, as Cal came to the bank, "I'll just kiss you right here for the sake of the fish," and, suiting the action to the word, she planted a good smack on his upturned mouth.

"Now we will see what he weighs. But first here is your reward," slipping a big solitaire off his finger and holding up his hand, "tie it on if necessary."

"Why, what is that for?" stammered she.

"Didn't you say 'yes, yes, yes?'"

"Yes."

"Well, that meant fish, horse and man, and I'm the man."

"Mr. Wagner—Cal—let me go. My! the people are all watching us."

"Never mind, show them your hand. Just two

pounds and a quarter," said Cal, as he adjusted the scales, "the biggest one this season so far."

"Yes, a fish, a horse and a man—quite a catch for one day," laughingly said Miss Asquith.

"The details of that catch are duly recorded in the hotel register and never will be duplicated," said Cal at dinner, as the party made merry and toasted the future ranch owner, who blushed rosy as a girl of sixteen, while Cal was as brim full of joy as a lad with a new pair of red top boots and sled to match. The following telegram fairly burned the wires:

"Stoddersmith, Boston. Caught a trout, a horse and a man with a six ounce rod. Trip to India postponed. Resign position today.

"Miss Asquith."

To which they replied:

"Miss Asquith, Estes Park via Lyons, Colo. Congratulations. Fish, horse and man uncertain property. Resignation accepted to take effect day of ceremony. Stoddersmith."

It was decided to go overland to Chiquita's Buena Vista ranch on horseback and with pack animals, the road horses and buckboard being started a few days ahead by way of Georgetown and the Berthoud Pass, to await the party at Hot Sulphur Springs, the trail from Estes via Specimen Mountain being impassable for anything on wheels.

"I am very anxious," said Jack, "that Hazel

should see the grandest bit of scenery in Colorado. While the average mind is satisfied with Estes, still there is one little area beyond Estes that surpasses anything else, and there is but one way to get to it—walk.”

Two good camp hustlers were engaged to do the work of packing, putting up tents and other duties in common. By going ahead a camp was located and pitched by the time the sightseers overtook the advance guard. A saddle horse to each member of the party, three small pack mules and a Mexican burro—the Rocky Mountain canary which Jack promised his sister year after year—the luggage so packed being ample for three times the number in the party.

The sun had crossed the noonday meridian when the final adios was given. Striking to the right of the Horseshoe Park road the trail led into a labyrinth of forest burned “down timber,” miles of denuded trees—sentries in nature’s graveyard—and as the wind wheezed dismally through the few branches left by the consuming fire, their creaking and rattling was not unlike the clatter of a thousand skeletons assembled in some vast amphitheatre to dance away a few years of eternity’s exile.

The first camp was made in the center of this weirdly fantastic home of goblins and boggy men. The tents had been pitched and camp fires started when Jack

and his four companions came straggling along. The side packs, containing commissary supplies, stood gaping, awaiting the cook. Frying pans, coffee pot and "Dutch oven" appealed, as it were, for recognition, so in one chorus the honor was thrust upon Jack to "get the first meal." But he was a past-master in the art, notwithstanding he had not officiated before in the presence of so "finnicky" an assemblage.

"Now, you ladies who have a cupboard full of clean dishes to use when you commence to prepare a meal, and a table to prepare it on and a cook book to guide you, and a sink for the trash, and shelves full of handy ingredients, and when the meal is ready every dish has been used and every utensil stands neglected with traces of its having fulfilled a mission belonging to it, and who sigh because there are so many pots, stewpans and table dishes to wash and dry after the meal is over,—just watch the frontier method."

Jack had superintended the packing of the "mess box," so he knew where all the supplies were. Seizing a stick, provided for the purpose, his first act was just like that of a woman. He poked the fire, but in his case it was to "draw out" a bed of coals on which he set the oven skillet, a cast iron utensil about five inches deep, with long legs under it and a bail and cast iron cover half an inch thick. The latter he placed on the fire logs. Next he washed his hands, then put a

tablespoonful of coffee for each cup into a big pot and added cold water. This was put on one corner of his bed of coals. Taking a six quart pan he put in flour, some salt, a pinch of sugar, some milk—which by good luck they had managed to capture at the last ranch—then some baking powder, and stirred it all up with a big iron spoon until it was stiff. The mixing was done on a convenient rock. Here Jack looked suspiciously at the quizzical eyes which followed his every movement. He washed his hands again, then with turned-up shirt sleeves moulded the dough, adding flour until it was biscuit thick. Turning another pan upside down he flattened a portion of the dough to the desired thickness, then cut his biscuits square. The remainder of the dough in the original pan was treated likewise where it was. Cutting off a piece of bacon rind he “greased” his oven skillet thoroughly, placed the biscuits therein, then put the hot cover upon the skillet and a shovelful of hot coals on the cover. The coffee was just beginning to boil, so he set the pot back on some hot ashes, washed his pans, spoons and hands, and in a twinkling was slicing up some bacon and calf’s liver, which he placed in a frying pan near the bread oven.

Bright tin cups, plates, knives, forks and spoons were handed around and the “folks” instructed to “get your places near the grub pile.” A bucket of

cold brook water stood handy by. Jack opened a can of peas, which were soon sizzling in a double bottomed stewpan. A round wooden box was marked "Oleo"—but no one, except Jack, knew it to be otherwise than "best Elgin butter."

Into another frying pan Jack put some of the butter, and when it was good and hot added half a dozen brook trout that also had escaped the notice of the now hungry onlookers. The scent of savory viands nearly precipitated a riot.

"Supper!" called Jack.

"Why, you don't know whether those biscuits are burned to death or raw," said Hazel. "Look at him settle that coffee with cold water. Where's an egg?"

Jack lifted the cover off the oven and a cloud of steam rose up and wafted away, then he set the skillet in the center of the party, the fish beside the bread and the bacon near at hand; peas came along and Hazel picked up a lightly browned, rich, creamy biscuit, breaking it in two and adding a dab of butter, took a bite, smacked her lips and said "More." The verdict was unanimous.

The routine of camp life is not a dull one; new and varied episodes follow each other in rapid order while on the trail. The informal mannerisms of camp life become contagious and an irresistible impulse takes possession of the most conservative to break

away from conventionalities. Bantering persiflage bubbles in everyone, and good natured raillery adds zest to all phases of the experience, whether it rains or shines.

No sooner had Jack straightened up his kitchen than he inspected the disposition of the horses, seeing that each one had as good a spot to crop grass as was obtainable. Then the beds. "Put some more of those second growth pine boughs under that bunch of blankets and it will be more like a good curled hair mattress, to which I presume Miss Asquith is accustomed; dig a trench all around each tent; it may rain before morning and this side hill will be a running river if it does; spread that wagon sheet over the saddles and 'commissary' before you turn in; we will want to start about eight o'clock; you may sleep until six." Thus he gave his instructions to the hustlers.

After a little chat, as they sat on the ground, Turk-fashion, or lolled against a tree, first one yawned and of course the others followed suit, so Jack suggested "early to bed."

Breakfast over, saddles were cinched, camp equipment all snugly packed away and the laborious climb was commenced which was to take them to the slide rock trail five miles long, following the crest of the great continental divide which separates the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific.

The men walked behind their respective ponies, lessening their labor by hanging to the ponies' tails, while the fair sex suffered almost as much hardship listening to the panting, patient animals, as they stopped every hundred feet to get a breath and "blow."

"Oh, say, but this is a corker!" said Cal, as he steadied himself and leaned against a tree for a little rest.

"I often wish my tongue would hang out like a dog's when I get to climbing these high peaks. Seems as though mine fills my throat up so I can't breathe," said Jack, his remark causing much merriment.

The summit was not far distant at ten o'clock, and as they surmounted the last slope the clouds rolled in above them like a great drop curtain, black and dense. Onward the great canopy spread toward the sunlit peaks beyond, leaving a trail of drizzle, sleet and snow. Then the entire party was swallowed up in an immense gray fog bank, while darker electrically charged masses of moisture bowled along, chasing each other through phosphorously illuminated paths, much to the consternation of the ladies.

"Oh, it's lightning right here! Won't it strike us?" exclaimed Miss Asquith.

"It might give you a little shock that would tingle some, but not enough to hurt you," vouchsafed Jack.

The light clouds soon followed, then the sun shone bright, and in a few minutes the gum coats provided for just such an emergency had been relegated to the strings on the saddles. To the left, on the slope of another hogback, rose tier after tier of little lakes, seven terraces in all, each fringed with a belt of green pine trees; behind each belt rose a precipitous ledge of rock.

“Just look at that, isn’t it grand?” said Hazel.

Jack had provided plates and the panoramic camera snapped its welcome to the view. Five exposures were made to insure a good one, then the party filed along the ragged, dimly outlined trail which Indians had used for a century or more. In the distance could be seen the headwaters of the Cache le Poudre and to the immediate right a huge snow bank formed a horseshoe half a mile in its arc. Leaving their ponies, at a suggestion from Jack the party walked over to the edge of the slide rock and gazed down into a small lake, of perhaps a thousand acres, nestled in a rocky embrace, twenty-five hundred feet below them, into the nearer edge of which stones were sent splashing by those who attempted a throw. Groups of pine trees dotted the farther shore of the lake and upon its bosom floated half a dozen immense icebergs, which remain summer after summer, during the months of July and August, never entirely disappearing.

Again and again Jack attempted the difficult feat of obtaining a focus to register that grandest of picturesque spots on the plates especially prepared, but none proved successful when developed.

Slowly, regretfully, the march was again taken up and camp was made on the low pass where pools of water flow from two outlets, one north into North Park, the other south into Middle Park and the Grand River. This camp was beneath the famous Specimen mountain and its fantastic spire-like rock formations, on the apex of which the "Big Horn" dozed in perfect security, the spires succeeding each other and making the great aerial stairway accessible only to the sure-footed mountain sheep.

No one enjoyed the life of the camp half as much as did Chiquita. She was in her element. The respite from the continual grind of college had been such a welcome one that she preferred to listen to the others rather than join in the general conversation. The topics discussed found no sympathetic chord in her mind, and, notwithstanding the years she had submitted to the refining influences of education, she was a savage at heart. She realized it. Her restive spirit broke the bonds of captivity as soon as the first campfire was lighted. Like a golden winged chrysalis she burst her civilization fetters and became again the forest-born Indian maiden, Chiquita. No longer did she feel

the restraint which society demanded. The buoyant freedom of the camp injected new life into her veins, new aspirations into her mind. But she was not aware that the very ascendancy of civilization immeshed her in its grasp. Her manners, always charming, had become more so under the polish of education and association with those who trained the soul as well as the hand, the eye, the body.

"The smoke of the tepee fire has driven away the oppressive chaotic whirl of classes, recitations and examinations which have had possession of me ever since I left the college," she said, apologetically.

"That was one reason I had for making this trip overland," said Jack. "I knew you longed to break away from crockery and tablecloths, and in your tent you will find something that will please and make you still more at home."

When Jack superintended the packing of the paraphernalia for the trip over the trail, he managed to include in Chiquita's outfit a complete set of buckskin garments, and these she found awaiting her. It was not long before she appeared in her native costume.

"Now you look natural," said Cal.

"The daughter of the woods is happy again," she replied, half sadly, but, recovering quickly, proposed a specimen-hunting expedition up the mountain which derives its name from the great pockets of specimen rocks found upon its slopes.

The party picked its way carefully over slippery, slimy, ooze-covered shale to the specimen beds. Geodes, rounded nodules of rock, filled with waxy uncrystallized deposits of infiltrated silicious waters were broken open, presenting in some instances masses of infinitesimal stalactites, in others the beautiful ribbon agate so much prized by the mineralogist, with its alternate rows of different colors. Much more difficult to find was chrysoprase in green, and the flesh red carnelian, all of these known as chalcedony and of which in Rev. 21 : 19 and 20, St. John describes the third foundation of the wall of the holy city as "a chalcedony," the tenth foundation "a chrysoprasus." Hours were spent in digging these precious souvenirs from their resting place.

Far above, an occasional mountain sheep appeared for a moment, reconnoitering to see if it was safe for him to descend with his family to the night camp of the Big Horn, for the oozy, slimy deposit was salty and this "lick" was the most famous in all the great length and breadth of the Rocky Mountains. It consequently became the resort of thousands of those wary, intelligent animals, but there were times when the insatiable desire for alkali grew so strong that no danger appalled them, and they rushed recklessly only to meet death at the hands of the hunter who took advantage of this weakness. Skulls, broken horns

and bones could be discerned upon the apex of many of the spires or truncated cones which rose at intervals from the eruptive lava, that in ages gone by had broken forth from the earth's crust, the surface of one of these beds being, in many cases, not over three feet in width, while the precipitous sides of the cone varied from one foot to a thousand feet. To these dizzy spots, which formed the Big Horn's aerial stairway, did this wonderful animal bound, whether pursued or in search of a resting place, alighting with sure foot, and immediately curling down for a nap or another bound in event danger was scented. That leap from danger was in itself marvelous—with all four feet curled beneath that ponderous body, the iron muscles warmed by the heavy hair coat, it was not the laborious effort of a steer elevating its hindquarters, unfolding one foreleg and then the other with a groan; it was a propulsion of a seemingly inert mass into space, a touch of toes to the earth and another bound into the air and probably out of sight, for that stairway is a mass of intricate, steep sided fissures, deep rifts opening one into another, each presenting a ledge sufficiently large to enable one of these sure-footed travelers to find "bouncing room" and so down, down, down for a thousand or more feet this denizen of the clouds would make his escape. This method of retreat being so sudden and the disappearance so sure, tales

have been oftentimes told of the wonderful leaps into mid air, dropping to the bottom of one of those cañons and of his sheepship alighting on his horns, none the worse for jumping half a mile or more.

All one afternoon Chiquita told wonderful stories of the wild game life, the parties of hunters who came even from Europe to wait for days until the sheep came to the "lick," and how these hunters crept up to the "beds" in the darkest and stormiest nights, waiting within rifle shot until the dawn should break, when the slaughter would commence. She told of the bands of elk, two and three thousand herding together, migrating from their summer feeding grounds among the high willow grown, spongy bogs, to the cedar grown mountains along Eagle River, crossing Middle Park in October and November after the first great snow storms began to drive them out.

"The mountains around here used to be the greatest paradise for game that Indian ever found. Is it any wonder my people resent the intrusion of the pale-face?" said she, after giving an enthusiastic account of one of the Ute hunting expeditions which took place when she was but a few years old.

The fascination and charm which held the listener spellbound could not be analyzed. Chiquita in her college dress and college speech was not the Chiquita of the forest. Day after day as the party wended its

course along the Grand River and over the range to those famous springs at the Buena Vista ranch, she pointed out hunting grounds, battle fields where Cheyennes fought the Utes, or Sioux came down from the north to wage a war of conquest.

The buckboard was at Hot Sulphur Springs when they arrived. Miss Asquith and Cal, it is needless to remark, found this conveyance more to their liking, at least a part of the time, than the saddle method.

From the ranch excursions were made to Egeria Park, where the towering Toponas rock lifted its ragged summit over five hundred feet in the air, and on whose side a city of swallows, martins and mud-nesting birds numbering into tens of thousands, dwelt until the winter breath drove them to the warm southland. A trip to the famous Steamboat Springs, with its porcelain frescoed caves, belching forth the peculiar chug, chug, chug of a Mississippi boat, as though some giant ventriloquist were navigating one of those floating palaces in the bowels of the earth. Great trout were captured, after arduous labor, from the sluggish waters of the Bear River, but little peace was afforded the whole trip from the pestiferous swarms of red-legged grasshoppers exiled from the plains, to be buffeted back and forth from the surrounding ranges of snow-capped mountains, until the white man's destroying agency should catalogue them with the auk,

the buffalo and the red man; as Chiquita chronicled it, "another example of the onward march of civilization."

The removal of the Utes from White River to the Uintah reservation had been so distasteful to Chiquita that she seldom visited the remnants of her people domiciled in a strange land. Many of these, however, made pilgrimages to her ranch, and the various tourists who shared in her hospitality had opportunity to see the blanket Indian in all his modern splendor of cast-off army garments and civilian society apparel.

Yamanatz made his home a greater part of the year at his daughter's place, but the aged chief had lost his vigor and only waited the call to the Great Hunting Ground beyond. He took little interest in the comings and goings of strangers, but enjoyed the company of Jack, who made it his mission to entertain the old warrior in every manner possible as far as he could.

The time for Chiquita to return to college was approaching. She had given up the trip to California on account of the sequel which the little romance of Miss Asquith and Cal had brought about. Chiquita had obtained their promise that the wedding should take place at the Buena Vista ranch.

The preparations were made and the services of a clergyman, who was making a tour of the mountains,

was secured. Cal was elated at the unexpected turn of affairs and Miss Asquith was easily reconciled. Jack gave away the bride and the "wedding bells" which comprised a part of the ceremony "pealed forth" from a lot of Indian tom-toms, sleigh bells and tin pans in the hands of some visiting Utes.

The newly made man and wife started, after the wedding repast was served, for Denver. Jack, Hazel and Chiquita followed a few days later, Chiquita to return to college, Jack to continue his journey to the mine.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHIQUITA GRADUATES.

In a room overlooking the broad Connecticut valley, a student, wearing cap and gown, stood by the window watching the clouds as they floated in filmy drapery above the long rows of corn, tobacco and rhubarb which paralleled each other on either side of the historic stream that divides western Massachusetts. Chiquita, as she surveyed the scenery, then the room and then herself, heaved a sigh of satisfaction. The same old routine of registering, getting the trunks unpacked, studies and classes arranged, had come to an end. Greetings by classmates, introductions to new professors, salutations to members of the faculty and respects to the dean had taken their regular order, and now the daughter of Yamanatz gazed wistfully into the deep waters which reflected the clouds above. The room was gorgeous in Indian blankets, draperies, spears, arrows, pottery, beaded scarfs and long war bonnets, gold and silver-mounted leather trappings of bridles, lariats, saddle skirts and pistol holsters adorned the walls, while the floor and

furniture were smothered in lion, beaver, wolf, bobcat and fox skins. Busts of Powhatan and Massasoit looked down from pedestals upon the young Indian girl as she reflected the advancing stages of education and refinement which make the civilized world. Well she remembered the lonesome, world forgotten time when she first registered in the great reception room, seven years before, after two years' private tutorship in her effort to master the English language and learn her A, B, C's.

Oh! the days and nights of study, study, study! Nothing but knowledge, for breakfast, dinner, supper and dreams. And as she looked forward to the easy senior year and honors which awaited her upon graduation day, she smiled a little and then waxed serious.

"Me, Chiquita, the daughter of a red devil, mistress of English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, Greek and Latin. Winner of prizes in literature, elocution and music, as well as first lady at all class parties! For two years no function by any great society or college demonstration has been complete without Chiquita, and this is to be my last year. Then adios to my alma mater forever—yes, *forever*. It is little satisfaction to fill one's mind with knowledge. It is poverty. The mind is dull that is oppressed with wisdom. Chiquita is not as happy here as she expected. But, ah, happiness will surely come when I visit the sick, the

mained, and comfort the dying. In that life where the 'medicine man' of the paleface cuts out big chunk in sick man and pale-faced sister in 'medicine clothes' nurse 'em 'til all well. Ah, Jack, you told me the 'medicine' story in such simple language that I understood it far easier than I now interpret the oppressive wisdom dispensed at clinics or lecture room, by those who fetter themselves to profound and awe-inspiring dissertations, until human intelligence seems a fallacy. With this vast amount of knowledge how little we know! But that reminds me: what will be the theme for my valedictory? There is no one who can, no one who will expect this honor but Chiquita. And I will discuss 'Ambition,' something after this fashion:

“‘A soul lay fettered at the portals of heaven. The long, winding stairway reached down into space, through worlds of worlds, and countless millions ascended toward the great white throne, each unconcerned as to the fate of the other. On a bier, with body swathed in burial robes, lay the inanimate clay from which the soul fled after its imprisonment of the allotted threescore and ten years. Around the bier were gathered the few of the endless millions left behind, who remembered the departed a brief season and then became absorbed in the great race of life against death. Science is constantly establishing new guide-

posts in the chaos of obscurity and winning converts to the domain of enlightened intelligence.'

"There, that is what comes of educating a Ute chief's daughter, and about six pages of that will be proof positive that the savage is infinitely happier with the worship of the sun, the wind, the water as animate objects, than we in the realm of knowledge with our defunct moons and birdless heavens."

Chiquita spent a great portion of her senior year in day dreaming and imaginings, often putting her thoughts into manuscript form. Not that she expected to use them, but because she read the stories she thus improvised over and over to herself, occasionally sending one to Jack for his inspection and criticism. If Jack said it was good she kept it, but if he made objections to any portion, she destroyed the whole. In one of these she wrote of her people and herself and the utter folly of any attempt on the part of the Indians to regain their lost hunting ground and lands. She wrote thus:

"Alas! for my people! The Great Spirit of the white man is probably the same as the Great Manitou of the red man, the Buddha of the Hindoo and the Mahomet of the Arab. All worship a divine being, all nations and tribes of the earth acknowledge a power, mysterious, ever present but unseen, who rules the world, the elements and

the actions of his followers. The white races are intellectual, far outranking the black man of Africa, the yellow man of eastern Asia and the red man of America. In the end I see but one result, the occupation by them of the entire world and ultimate blotting out of all religion except the Christian belief in the Messiah, who in the form of man was crucified to do away with the offerings, sacrifices and consecrated rites established by the Hebrews and observed by them without dissension until the commencement of the Christian era. But there are Jews today still looking for the King promised by the old prophets of the Bible, and while prophecy upon prophecy has been fulfilled in a most marvelous manner, these people with no country, no flag, no standing as a nation are promised the earth and fulness thereof and a new Jerusalem.

“Do not the followers of Buddha look forward from the death of Gaudama, who became incarnate 500 years B. C., to the thousands of years which must pass before another Buddha appears to restore the world from ignorance and decay? Do not the noble red-skinned tribes of the great American continent pray to their Manitou for the restoration of the land where the buffalo roam and the paleface cannot molest them?

“But, alas, my people! The heathen world must succumb before the strides of education, science and

civilization. It is useless to hope for the return of those days, and while the children of the forest cannot in one generation adapt themselves to the ways and habits of industry, education and social life of their white brethren, the time is not far distant when the blanket Indian will be as the buffalo, and the noble red man become a farmer, mechanic or politician.

“The ‘home, sweet home’ of the people is the place where they spent their early youth, and no matter where their other years are passed, no matter what their successes, no matter what their failures, the sweetest spot on earth is the home of their younger days, to which millions return and from which millions die far away, but with ‘fatherland’ a vision still bright before them.”

The last term was at end. Visitors flocked to the old historic town to witness the commencement exercises and hear Chiquita, the Ute's daughter, deliver the valedictory. Her father, the aged Yamanatz, was there with several chiefs in full council robes, and this of itself was sufficient to draw thousands of the curious. Prominent officials, who had watched the progress of yoking the savage red maiden of the forest to her civilized white sister of fashion, occupied front seats on the platform of the edifice wherein the commencement scenes were enacted. Interest in the preliminary features seemed to flag, and only desultory at-

tention greeted the various ones as diplomas were handed out.

Little were the gowned professors and learned LL. D.'s prepared for the tumultuous wave of approbation which greeted Chiquita as she appeared on the platform from a side entrance, clad in her native costume of richly-beaded buckskin, her copper colored face set in a frame of intensely black hair, which reached to her knees in voluminous braids from whose ends dangled the "medicine" of the Utes. Words are feeble to express the transition from darkness to educated light, but there she stood in primeval beauty, uttering her valedictory in language so fascinating that not one syllable was lost.

Bouquets were showered upon her, "bravos" rent the air, and, as she stepped before the dean to receive her sheepskin, with its guarantee that Chiquita was educated, a smile of profound satisfaction played for an instant over her marvelously thoughtful face. Then spying Yamanatz near the platform, she bounded into his arms to receive his blessing, her filial affection superior to her decorous surroundings. Never before in the history of the college had such an outburst of enthusiasm greeted a graduate.

CHAPTER XV.

A HOSPITAL AND A BOARDING HOUSE.

Long rows of windows in a massive building gave light to thousands within, who in turn looked out upon the thousands plodding their way to and from toil. It was in one of the hospital zones of the second city in the United States and the building was one of the largest hospitals in the city. Within the memory of the present generation the word "hospital" was fraught with weird and uncanny dark rooms, bloody floors, shrieking victims of accident or disease undergoing the torture of the knife, muffled rumbles of iron-wheeled trucks rolling in new patients or wheeling the lifeless form of the dead to the morgue. Over the door, unseen by mortal man, an ominous inscription, "He who enters here leaves all hope behind."

By the onward, irresistible advance of that flickering flame which penetrates the darkest corner of bigotry and ignorance, science has groped its way beyond the portals of death and snatched many from the very coffin after being prepared for the grave. This is civilization. Even today thousands look askance at the

uncompromising brick and stone walls, shuddering as the ambulance gong warns them of its approach, bearing the victim, perchance, of some terrible disaster. To the unsophisticated who visit for the first time one of these institutions a surprise is in store. The awful gloom is penetrated by sunlight. In place of bespattered walls and crimson stained operating table are snow white tiling and glass slabs mounted on iron frames. The sickening offensive odor of the old "slaughter pens" has been relegated to the dark ages, and nothing worse than a whiff of carbolic acid or a possible suspicion of iodoform greets the most sensitive nostrils.

Within such an institution Chiquita found herself face to face with the "medicine" man of the paleface, and her white sister in "medicine" clothes. Arrayed at last in the oriental blue and white striped uniform, white apron with strings crossed at the back and jaunty little white cap, Chiquita began the task of familiarizing herself with the calling which so recently has placed woman in a sphere entirely her own, and made her the subject of hero worship on battlefield and in peaceful home. Faithfully she performed the laborious work of smoothing the rumpled clothing of a fever-racked patient, or adjusting the uncomfortable bandages of another, crushed and maimed. In the operating room she administered anesthetics or as-

sisted with sponge and basin, and at clinics she listened intently to all the specialists, while in other channels she learned the necessary business methods needed for successfully carrying on the expensive undertaking which she proposed to inaugurate for the good of her own people.

The last half of the second year of hospital life had commenced. It was summer, and Jack, with Hazel, was returning from his annual trip to the Blazing-Eye-by-the-Big-Water mine.

Chiquita had enjoyed an afternoon with them, driving about the city, and observed that Jack was not as bright and cheerful as usual.

"No," said he, "I don't feel at all well. I think I over-exerted myself at the mine."

Hazel and Chiquita insisted upon his consulting a physician, but Jack contended that it was "nothing; I will be all right in the morning."

His malady, however, grew more pronounced, the third day finding him with a high fever and in great bodily pain. A surgeon was called, who discovered that an immediate operation was imperative.

Jack protested, but finally yielded to the pleadings of his wife, and arrangements were made to take the then almost helpless patient to the hospital.

The carriage was driven to where Chiquita in great anxiety awaited their coming. The surgeon had pre-

ceded them, informing the matron that it was a case of blood poisoning, and arranged for the admission of his patient.

At 9 o'clock that evening the affected part was lanced, giving temporary relief, but this disclosed a dangerous complication which would require a tedious operation and a prolonged stay in the hospital.

The next morning, as Chiquita prepared Jack for the operating table, they joked about the medicine tepee and dwelt long upon the singular coincidence that should bring them together under such circumstances. Chiquita administered the anesthetics. While Jack was losing consciousness, struggling vainly to gasp a breath of fresh air, she recalled the vivid description of hospital life which he had so long ago on Rock Creek depicted to her. As the surgeon skillfully wielded his various instruments, and with the electric wire burned the sensitive flesh along the track of the affected part, Chiquita for the first time felt a sinking, gaping, craving of her heart.

She realized in that one moment what it meant. She felt that if Jack should die her heart would cease its tumultuous beating, that if he lived she should forever have to keep her secret and stifle the emotions which her love for him revealed.

A sudden thought surged within her. "No one would know; should she"— "He is not for me—I

am a Ute's daughter, a degraded Indian. Can I live and see him the husband of another and not betray my secret? Oh, Jack! perhaps it had been better that Chiquita had never become a medicine tepee queen! Were it not better that the sister of the forest should never have been educated?

'A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring;
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.'

"I can not turn back. I will stifle my love for the one who lies there helpless. I will consecrate my life to the customs of his people, that I may leave a legacy to my people—the inheritance which civilization brings."

Mechanically she performed the rest of her duties; nurses had taken the unconscious form away in its swaths of bandages, while she remained to administer to other patients and begin the long siege of love's starvation, until her heart should capitulate and turn to stone.

The day following the operation, Chiquita's first duties were to take Jack's temperature and respiration, and note other conditions. She performed the latter with perfect composure, but when she essayed the counting of those "little blood knocks upon the wrist," her own heart beat so furiously that she was fearful of

making an error, and was obliged to ask another nurse to take that record. Afterward, however, she was able to control her feelings, and take Jack's temperature with composure.

Upon the fifth day, when the internes were dressing Jack's wound, it was discovered that another operation would have to be performed. The surgeon had overlooked a portion of the affected tract, and the wound would again have to be reopened and rescarified with a burning white hot electric wire. This discovery was made Saturday, and Jack was at once informed.

Hazel tried to encourage him, but despondency seemed to take possession of him, and all day Sunday, as the church bells clanged their discordant soul-racking peals, he tossed restlessly upon his bed. The terrific winds from the southwest blew their breath to the north in sweltering blasts, and poor humanity had to endure it. Tuesday, Chiquita once more was called upon to watch Jack as he succumbed to the influence of the anesthetic. Once more she counted his heart throbs as the surgeon scraped, burned and annihilated germs, bugs and septic tissue, and once more her heart wildly stampeded in its ecstatic throbbing of love for him whose life she literally held in her own hands, as his hallowed form reposed unconscious on the glass slab.

Oh, what joy to her! what an entrancing, ravishing

hour! As she afterwards lived those minutes over and over again, allowing her stony heart to grow tender as the impulse swayed her, she was carried back in vivid memory to the camp on Rock Creek where she first learned of the medicine tepee queen.

The second operation was successful, and although Jack's convalescence was prolonged for months, he was fully cured of an ailment which in days of less scientific skill had invariably resulted fatally.

With the culmination of her hospital education, Chiquita turned her attention to the study of the economics of city life, and investigation of the details relating to her future enterprise.

She found herself domiciled in a rather pretentious establishment in a fashionable and aristocratic neighborhood.

"Yes, Señorita Chiquita, I shall be pleased to have you make your home with my family, as they call themselves, and we are a happy houseful." So spake the little black-eyed proprietor of the "Addington." She was Mrs. Pickett. Pickett was a speculator. The whole atmosphere in and about Pickett reflected the market; if he was on the right side of corn or wheat or provisions one could feel it, hear it, see it in Pickett's handshake, voice and clothes. If, however, he was "bull" on a "bear" movement, the Pickett barometer dropped accordingly.

"Pshaw! that wheat is worth a dollar any day. Buy five thousand at 72." But "puts" went to 68 cents at the close of the "privileges" and Pickett was glum.

Pickett was not a big plunger, only one of the ten million poor, hungry hangers on who watch the "ticker," listen to the reports made up for the masses by the master hand of manipulators, out of storm centers, visible supply, and world's consumption, and then gorge the bait.

Pickett was a winner one day on a pork deal and among other commodities in the "pit" which seemed a "good thing" was corn at 31 cents. He bought a small line and then forgot it in the strenuous circumstances which followed. At the close of the day's pork business he pocketed a big roll of bills and went out with the boys for a good time, only to fall down stairs and break his ankle. After three weeks' suffering he hobbled into the broker's office. Greetings were exchanged with the regulars, then he sought the cashier to draw the balance of his pork money. This account being settled the cashier said to him, "Pickett, what are you going to do with that corn?"

"What corn?"

"Why that corn you bought at 31 cents the day you broke your ankle."

"I did not buy any corn, did I?"

"Yes, you did, and there is to your credit \$7,000."

"Seven thousand dollars!" shouted Pickett, and before any answer could be made he ordered the deal closed, then went out and bought a fast "hoss," a pair of checked trousers, a silk hat, and hunted up the girl who immediately became Mrs. Pickett as soon as the necessary formalities could be arranged. But the seven thousand dollars did not last long and the support of a wife was more than Pickett bargained for. Matters grew very serious and Mrs. Pickett found she had either to go to work in some clerkship capacity, or start a boarding house or peanut and candy store near some school house. She chose the boarding house, which soon merged into a swell private hotel, and it was in the "Addington" that Chiquita saw a phase of life so common to the man of the world and the bachelor girl charging full tilt into the twentieth century.

"Mrs. Pickett, please tell me a little of yourself, that I may understand why the white sister has no husband to care for her as other white sisters have."

It was about three months after Chiquita had taken up her residence at the "Addington." The two were on one of the porches which overlook the lake on the north shore in a most beautiful location near Sheridan drive.

"It is a long story, but I can make it very brief in words, although the years have been filled with events

which handicap a woman of my age in looks and spirit, and that handicap will make the story seem longer to me than to a listener."

"Don't skip any of the incidents, will you? I mean those portions where the Christian spirit upheld you in your grief and sadness."

"I was young. Mr. Pickett's fast horse must share the blame for a portion of the admiration I became possessed of for Mr. Pickett. Then he was such a swell dresser, a good singer and at that time a Board of Trade man, at least I thought so, and when he showed me that pile of money and said 'Junie, let's get married,' I said, 'Pickett, give my father a home and I will marry you tomorrow.'

"We were married, but the money did not last long and poor Pickett lost all ambition save that of watching the 'ticker,' reading the market reports, and living in the fascinating atmosphere of 'bucket shops,' gambling in grain, stocks and provisions, as do an army of poor, deluded would-be speculators.

"There was but one course for me—a boarding-house, and here I have lived. My father died, and soon after, my husband was stricken with a lingering illness, which lasted six years ere death relieved him of his sufferings. It has been a bitter cup, but after all, as my good father often said, 'It is all for the best. He waters the corn and weeds alike, and burns up the

roses as well as the thistles; trust in God, Junie,' and so I try to make the most of what I have."

"Mrs. Pickett, it is so hard for me, an Indian born girl, a daughter taught to pray to the wind, the sun, the rain as animate gods, capable of doing good or harm, to have that faith you possess—that beautiful faith in the hereafter, in a God whose heaven and home you know not of, yet where, you acknowledge, there are no flowers, no birds, no deer, no giving in marriage, no thirst, and no hunger. What, then, can my uneducated people be expected to relinquish—that great and Happy Hunting Ground, which is to be returned to us as it was before the white man drove us to the setting sun, drove the buffalo into the great sea and destroyed our homes, our villages, and killed our warriors? It is hard for Chiquita with all her learning and life among her palefaced sisters to say, 'Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.' But I try to believe that your life is the better one for the world, for the human race, and that in the end there will be no more savages, no more heathens, no more unbelievers."

CHAPTER XVI.

GALLING YOKES OF CIVILIZATION.

In one of the large wholesale houses, a junior partner, much interested in municipal affairs and whose endorsement was sought by many a candidate seeking election—for the junior partner wielded a vast interest in both the secular and Christian life—was presented to Chiquita and she spent many an hour, at convenient times, discussing the affairs of mutual interest, he seeking to establish the superiority of the ways of education and civilization, she accepting the teachings and attempting to persuade herself that he was right and that savagery was nothing more nor less than animal life in the woods.

“Mr. Dunbar,” she said one day, “the red man of the forest is sometimes a gambler, and when the spirit moves him he seeks one of his kind and they spread a blanket under a tree or near the wigwam and there follow their inclination, open and above board, without fear of police interference. I am told that the young white man sometimes has a similar temptation in the big city, but that you have laws which forbid

gambling. Nevertheless, because of political influence, there are booths and rooms where gambling in its civilized conditions can be found. Will you take Chiquita to a gambling den that she may see the class of men found at the tables?"

The brows of the merchant contracted, he hesitated and stammered as he attempted to reply.

"Why—er—my dear Señorita, you know I am a pillar of the church, an active member in one of the largest wholesale houses in the west, and my example to my young men, if I were to appear in a gambling room, would be horrifying. I—er—"

"Oh, never mind if it would prove such a heinous offense; but why, Mr. Dunbar, is it allowed, if respectable people can not go there without contaminating themselves? Is it possible that the people of a great city like this make laws and elect men to enforce those laws, and yet take no notice of law breakers except to protect them?"

"Señorita, it is useless to make any defense. Our officeholders are corrupt. The blush of shame rises to the face of respectable citizens when they have to acknowledge that they elect men to office simply because the candidate stands for party principles, only to make use of the office for private gain or personal spite. Of course, there are exceptions, but men do not go into political battles without expecting a re-

ward, and that reward must be a greater inducement than the one offered in private life. But I will escort you to a gambling den and we will see for ourselves."

"You certainly are brave to attempt it, and I shall thank you so much."

At ten o'clock a carriage drove up to a corner. Mr. Dunbar and Chiquita alighted—"an English tourist and his valet." It was but a few steps to the middle of the block where a pair of green covered swinging doors, on polished brass hinges, continually but noiselessly opened and closed. The bright glare of arc lights made the street as midday. The throngs of pedestrians glanced at the green doors, and either passed by without comment, or one would say to the other, "Great game up in Doll's." "Why don't the police shut it off?" "Got a pull with the high chief now."

Mr. Dunbar and his protégé found themselves in a long entry at the head of the stairs which led to a door at its farther end, where at a little window sat a fat gentleman with gray mustache.

"Walk in, right this way. No danger. Suppose you are looking for a little game. Go through the doors at the right."

The great baize covered screens opened as if by magic, revealing a large square room, carpeted with velvet and smothered with deep piled rugs. Magnifi-

cent landscapes by Bierstadt, Colby and Elkins hung from the walls, depicting the Rocky Mountains and the plains. Immense chandeliers, festooned with prisms which scintillated the colors of the rainbow, hung from the ceilings. Mahogany and rosewood sideboards glistened with cut glass decanters, tumblers and fine chinaware, while the sable attendant served dainty refreshments and thirst-assuaging liquids to those who asked for them. Leather upholstered tête-a-têtes graced corners and bay windows, while in an anteroom long racks were filled with files of newspapers and magazines. A wainscot of highly polished black walnut surrounded the room, and rich India draperies deadened the walls. At a table near the entrance were three young men playing poker, while the keeper of the game, in accents harsh, urged newcomers to "take a hand, only a quarter to draw cards." At a side table five cattlemen, just from the stock yards, were killing time in a game of draw, while on the opposite side a roulette wheel spun round and round until the little ball settled into its space and the announcement "the red wins" was greeted by clicking of chips as the croupier paid out or raked in.

But the great throng was at the far end of the room, where, around a table some seven feet long and four feet wide, were men three to five deep, craning, pushing, reaching, to place a bet or receive their chips on

a winning card. The air was close and hot, just the slightest murmuring, the low indistinct utterings of questions asked and answered: "How many times has the queen been loser?" "The tray is a case," "Copper the jack for a blue chip," "Play ace to lose and king to win," "Last turn in the box, gentlemen, four for one on the call." A scruffing of feet, a sigh of relief, the tension eased up for a few moments while the dealer shuffles his cards. Some change seats, others quit the game, new ones buy chips, and again the "soda" card appears and another deal is on. The suppressed excitement is again apparent in feature and action; the flushed face of the winner and the cold sweat on the brow of the loser make no impression on the calm, self-satisfied face of dealer or lookout, each of whom wears a light slouch hat, the brim shading the eyes. Both are dressed neatly and in good taste, except for the enormous diamonds they show in shirt bosoms and on the little finger. There is no tragedy here. The sequel of the life in a city gambling den is the wife at home without food, or suffering from dyspepsia because of its plenteousness, or perhaps in the counting-room of some Board of Trade office, directors' room of a bank, or a police station, to which the embezzler is taken after the confession. The mining camp and frontier gambling dens differ in respect to lawlessness, but the atmosphere after all is about the same.

"I am ready to go, Mr. Dunbar," said Chiquita.

"While we are at it, suppose we take in one of the theater restaurants and then at midnight see the worst sink hole of iniquity on the American continent," replied Mr. Dunbar, a look of "do or die" changing his usually kind face to that of uncompromising severity.

"I trust, Mr. Dunbar, I have not offended by asking a sacrifice of your self-respect, and—"

"No, no, do not mention it," interrupted he, quickly. "I am glad of this opportunity. To be sure it has taken a great deal of resolution on my part, not only to satisfy my consciousness of the propriety in the first place, but to feel that it is consistent with a Christian life to allow one's self on any pretext to come in contact with evil just to gratify curiosity. I am not in sympathy with the so-called slumming parties, either for the good such investigations may bring about, or for the benefit that such visitations might result in to the inmates. There are other methods by which the same end may be accomplished and not appear so drastic. I have sometimes wondered if there are really any grounds for the flings made at Chicago, and if there be any truth in the oft heard remark, 'Chicago's down town resorts have no counterpart in any other city in the world.' Of course I expect we will see a mild form

of dissipation and possibly one or two who may have taken a drop too much, but as those stories go from one to another they are exaggerated until one has to make allowance for these word pictures. But here we are."

"Have a private room, sir?" asked an attendant, for they had stepped into a hallway leading to private dining rooms up stairs. "We have nice rooms for private parties. If you expect ladies you can wait for them there."

Just then a lady, unaccompanied, came through the swinging doors and darted to the elevator. In a low tone she told the attendant to show her to No. 7, where she would wait. Mr. Dunbar and Chiquita rather undecidedly followed into the elevator and were whisked up to the second floor, where they sauntered along toward an open door. Merry peals of laughter wafted over transoms and a sudden opening of one door showed a party of five seated round a table, while a sixth member, one of the fair sex, was standing on the table. Then the door shut out the scene. Mr. Dunbar gasped a little, but concluded to go back to the ground floor and have a lunch in the main restaurant. They were shown seats well back from the front of the place, in a position commanding a good view of the tables, all of which seemed crowded.

"While we are waiting for our lunch we can study

the people," said Chiquita. "I guess the rooms up stairs are used by theatrical people and they give little dramas of their own."

"Yes, I should judge it to be dramatic," answered Mr. Dunbar grimly. "Do you notice at every table in the room some one is drinking, either a malt beverage or wine, and at a majority of the tables some one is smoking?" asked he of Chiquita.

"Yes, I presume they came here to forget the dark spots of a day's life and to drown sorrow in drink and music. You have not spoken of the classic strains coming from that harp and two fiddles."

Mr. Dunbar smiled audibly at the reference to music.

"Well, I don't consider this such an awful place for a wicked man, a man of the world; every one is well behaved and there is no loud noise, but these scenes lead to others still worse and the temptations offered here require a goodly sized purse and larger salaries to support this extravagance than the average man commands. But it is midnight and we must make our way to the resort in the next block."

Descending a steep stairway they found themselves at the end of a long room. The air was reeking with the fumes of smoke, stale beer and sickening perfumery. Shouts and loud guffaws mingled with shrill peals of screamly laughter. Glasses tinkled amid

the disconsolate strains of a discordant piano, but above all other sounds were the harsh orders of waiters. "Draw six," "one green seal," "two martinis," "four straight whiskies," "high ball and two gin fizzes." Down the long line of tables they passed men and women who leered at each other, drinking to each other's health, both sexes smoking cigarettes, some singing, some arguing, some swearing such oaths that the visitors fain would have fled the place. At the foot of the staircase, commanding the whole place and surrounded by painted creatures in the latest wraps, sat the proprietor, a man of fifty, dark and swarthy, with black curly hair and mustache. His face was filled with lines, the accumulations of years of debauchery. Upon his hands were diamond rings, seemingly too numerous to count, a watch fob with more gems than a fashionably dressed ball attendant would wear, hung below his vest, and his shirt front was literally ablaze with "sparklers." The poor dupes about him in this whirling vortex of hell were receiving their infamous commissions for inducing men who visited the resort to purchase drinks.

"And from whence come these sisters and daughters?" asked Chiquita.

"Go to the great sales counters of some of the cheaper grade of stores and follow the life of some poor unfortunate; seek the divorce court and find a

victim of misplaced affection; go to the political fountain and gaze at the high chief whose influence restrains the guardian of the public peace from interfering with these dens of vice where voters congregate to do honor to the chief. Seven thousand saloons in the city, with a following of twenty to each saloon to vote for their master who wields the baton of wide-open hell holes to the end of obtaining blood money from those who are protected! Señorita, this is the black spot on our fair Christian land. It is so to a greater or lesser degree in all cities, in all lands, where civilization endures. This bartering of and in human souls within the business districts of Chicago must come to an end. Now we will step into the police headquarters, only a block away, while I ask the desk sergeant a couple of questions."

As they started up the steps leading to the central detail headquarters a cab drove up to the curb, and a young man, whom Mr. Dunbar immediately recognized, stepped to the walk, followed by a detective in plain clothes. They lifted a good-sized sack of something from the cab and carried it past the late visitors. A clinking of silver was easily recognized and Mr. Dunbar became interested. He presumed the young man had just been arrested and naturally inquired the cause.

"Tommy, are you in trouble that you come in with

an officer at this hour?" inquired Mr. Dunbar of the supposed prisoner.

Tommy stopped and walked up to the speaker. It was some seconds before he recognized Mr. Dunbar in the disguise of a tourist. When he did so he hesitated to confide the truth of the circumstances, but finally acknowledged, under promise that the informant should never be known, that the sack contained over five thousand dollars, which had been collected from the proprietors of just such dens of vice as Mr. Dunbar had just visited.

"And my business is to count it, divide it into halves and quarters and deliver the respective bundles to those who are high on the throne of police authority."

"How often are you called upon to make this collection, division and delivery?" asked Mr. Dunbar.

"Oh, once every six weeks or so."

With that Mr. Dunbar stepped up to the desk and with a bow naively asked, "Can you tell me where there is a first-class gambling hall? I am a stranger to the calling, but would like to visit one of these dens said to be run in Chicago."

"An' who be ye thot ye want a gamblin' house at this time o' night? Get out o' here, there be's not a gamblin' din in all Chicago fer the last three years thot I've been on the cintral detail, is there, Jawn?"

And Mr. Dunbar took his departure with Chiquita. In her diary Chiquita entered this: "Visited the most horrible dens of vice imaginable, the refinement of educated debauchery, literally sitting in the lap of political lechery, hurling defiance at virtue, decency and respectability."

During her hospital career Chiquita had many experiences outside of the varied occurrences in the life of a nurse, which added to rather than detracted from the perplexities of civilizing her people. These other scenes enacted in the great empire of industry swept all minor attractions away, leaving a dreadful negative photographed indelibly upon her sensitive mind, whose films reproduced with startling detail not only the foreground of drastic events, but the background reproduction of unswerving determination on the part of political demagoguery which brought ruination to millions of people and even threatened the financial fabric of the entire world; a photograph more in accord with the despotic days of fiddling Nero than those of advanced civilization under the constitution of the new republic.

While waiting for a car that would take her to the hospital, Chiquita noticed numbers of men in rather shabby attire approach better clad individuals and after a little conversation each would go his way. In some instances the better dressed speaker put his hand

in his pocket and handed the other a coin. Then the latter waited a time before accosting another and then another. Oftener would the better dressed individual shake his head, even savagely repulsing the appeal of his less fortunate brother. One of these solicitors-at-arms, for such they were, approached Chiquita, and as she presented no frowning or repellant mien, he politely doffed his cap and explained in a few words his mission.

“Pardon me, lady, I am unfortunate, I am out of work and have no place to sleep tonight. I have three cents; for five cents I can get a bed. Will you give me a penny? I will get another somewhere.”

Closely scanning the man's face she saw not the hardened lines of dissipation, not the pallor of the convict nor the attenuated features of a cripple, but a young man in good health, decently clad, though in rather threadbare clothing. Chiquita had seen hundreds of men brought into the hospital of all grades and callings and had become an adept as a student of human nature. The man before her did not shift his eyes nor stand irresolute, but the mournful voice and drooping mouth told only too plainly that discouraging, despondent tale thrust so suddenly upon a prosperous nation in 1893.

“Why are you without work?” asked Chiquita.

“Canceled orders and help laid off indefinitely,” replied the young man.

"Why were the orders canceled?"

"I don't know exactly, but Wall street and free silver had something to do with it."

"Had you no money saved up to fall back upon at such a time?"

"Yes, ma'am; but the savings bank went to the wall and my three hundred, which I had been five years getting together, went with it."

"Can't you get a job as porter rather than beg?"

"There's a thousand men waitin' for all the 'porter' jobs. Lady, you don't know it, but half the population of this country is out of work."

"Where can you get a bed for a nickel?" asked Chiquita, dubiously.

"On the west side at one of the 'Friendship' houses."

"You mean a whole bed and room by yourself?"

"Oh, no, lady, just a shelf to lie on, perhaps an old quilt to cover up with. This costs a nickel; in some places we get a 'claim' on the floor for two cents."

"You say a 'claim' on the floor; you don't pay for sleeping on the floor?" said Chiquita, drawing back in amazement.

"Yes, we have to pay for everything but air in Chicago. We pick out our claim, first come, first served, and put down a newspaper for bed, cover up with another, all for two cents; but I don't like the floor. The other fellows step on you when they come in late."

"Are these places clean?" timidly inquired Chiquita.

"Not very, ma'am; not like the hospital."

"Well, my poor fellow, here is a quarter; I hope it will do you some good."

"Thank you, lady."

Instead of going to the hospital Chiquita made a pilgrimage to one of those well-known better class lodging houses, not far from the Board of Trade. Here she saw every chair of a hundred or more occupied by men similarly dressed and evidently looking for work. Of the numbers accosted all told the same tale of misfortune and all emphasized the deplorable condition of the great manufacturing industries throughout the United States. There was no work to be had at any price. Large firms reduced their forces to the lowest capacity possible. Many curtailed the working hours of all rather than discharge half the number, while one colossal corporation ran their works at a loss, despite the wide spreading distrust prevalent during the panic, which crippled every occupation, profession and calling. Banks closed their doors, regardless of the suffering inflicted, business houses, shorn of their credit, dropped all attempts to sustain relations with the world, and armies of men thrown out of employment had to provide for themselves and their families as best they could.

Money could not be borrowed. Even the gold-bearing bonds of the United States fell under the ban of suspicion; and nothing but gold, gold, gold, had any intrinsic value. The new word which wrought such dire disaster was *Coin*, and the bank notes presented day after day by Wall street sapped the gold of the treasury until repudiation seemed inevitable. The one man upon whose shoulders the burden of disaster fell, took the oath of office as President of the United States, on March 4th, 1893, the responsibility of a bond issue being thrown upon him by the outgoing administration. The new official refused to declare his policy. Wall street wanted knowledge positive as to the issuance of bonds with which to buy gold to maintain the reserve. Day followed day before the tension was relieved by a bond issue, which was succeeded by other bond issues. The harm had been done. Financial institutions bridged the torrent at one place only to succumb and plunge into the yawning abyss at another. Stagnation followed disaster. Had the new administration declined to give gold for the "coin" notes and tendered silver, could any greater ruin have overtaken American commerce?

Following in the wake of the ghastly spectre of commercial ruin, that cruel, remorseless and vindictive vulture, discontent, swooped down upon a far reaching industry, shrieked its defiant and soul curd-

ling edict "*Strike*," and to the consternation of the world, labor organizations refused to temporize. The steam pulses ceased to beat, machinery came to a standstill, the great factory doors closed against wage earners and the stupendous battle between iron handed men of toil and iron gloved employer was on.

Aided by sympathetic city and state officials the wage earners grew insolent and arbitrary. Pitying the unfortunate, misguided mechanic, artisan and laborer, the iron gloved employer awaited until the devouring flame of jealousy and strife consumed itself. It was under a broiling July sun that Chiquita and Jack visited the scene to see for themselves the effects of newsboys' hoarse cries, "*Extra! Extra!* All about the bloody strike! The Stock Yards in danger!"

Regiments of soldiers were bivouacked about the postoffice, on the lake front, and at the yards. Dis-mantled, untrucked, costly palace cars blocked railroad tracks from Van Buren street to the city limits. In the vicinity of Thirty-ninth street turbulent masses of muttering, riotous, eye-inflamed sympathizers congregated to watch the incoming United States troops from Fort Sheridan.

Women, carrying babies, mingled with the angry, unruly, drink-maddened throng, urging, aye, even commanding more devastation, more wrecking of

property. As the snail moving train of army equipment was pulled along the siding, coupling pins were drawn by the lawless, and as one car was recoupled another was detached. Soldiers, in United States uniform, endured insults of every nature.

A woman, acting as bodyguard to a crowd of jeering, taunting idlers, stepped up to a guard and spat in his face, then slapped him and in vulgar language derided him for wearing the uniform of liberty. The soldier was powerless to resent the affront, and this emboldened the vindictive throng to acts of greater violence. Turning to Chiquita, Jack said, with shame-faced candor, "Never did I expect to see my country's flag humiliated in such a manner."

The officer of the day approached. It was the seeming signal for an outbreak; a hundred throats responded to the one voiced cry, "The torch!" "Burn the train!" "Burn the Yards!" The woman pushed the man in front of her along the railroad track to within a few feet of the officers. The crowd behind drew closer, their jeers dropped to sullen, discontented murmurings. The officer held up his hand.

"Halt! Disperse!"

He waved his hand for the mob to go back, but they made no movement. The woman cried out, "You have no business to stop us;" the man in front made a rough remark and roared to his followers, "Come

on, we'll show 'em." The officer backed away, calling to a guard to take a position on a near-by fence. "Load with ball, make ready, aim," pointing his sword at the oncoming law-breaking, infuriated rufian who had stopped a sword's length away. The striker heard the words of the officer.

"When I count three I shall give the command, '*Fire!*' if you and your mob have not obeyed my order to disperse. One—two"—

The man looked at the soldier, at the carbine and the cold gray eye that followed along the barrel as the muzzle sought the breast of the leader, he measured the distance, he heard the word "two," then with despairing yell turned and fled.

The success of the mob at another place met with cheers and shouts of approval as an engineer was borne from the cab of his engine to a saloon across the way, a new recruit to the army of disorganized, rebellious workmen, fed by the ever ready impromptu orator seeking opportunity to air his views—a near friend and close imitator of the agitator commissioned "walking delegate."

"Jack," said Chiquita, "are these scenes, these property-destroying conflicts between employer and employe necessary for the advancement of civilization and fulfillment of that commandment that 'Ye love one another?'"

CHAPTER XVII.

WHENCE COME MY PEOPLE?

The holiday recesses were spent by Chiquita in the great eastern cities, where she attended theater, opera, and many social functions of greater or lesser magnitude.

After Jack's wedding she came to rely upon his wife—who found the Indian Señorita always included in the invitations sent the Sheppard house—to smooth the difficult paths of etiquette and to instruct her in the many formalities necessarily omitted in her college life, that were imperative upon being presented in the whirl of fashionable circles. She was welcomed by various clubs, literary folk, and at state receptions—this grandly intellectual daughter of a savage chief.

The first great effort she made in behalf of her people was an attempt to forestall the opening of the great expanse of land in the Indian Territory to settlement by the white people. A venerable senator from Massachusetts espoused her cause sufficiently to awaken a hope in her inexperienced breast that the

object could be accomplished. Another, from a western state, gladly joined in the undertaking, while a brilliant ex-secretary of state devoted his energies in her behalf.

At a memorable cabinet meeting the question was discussed, and in the presence of that august body, and of the President himself, Chiquita delivered her appeal, recounting step by step the claims under which the prerogative of the Indian to the land in question should be forever recognized:

“Mr. President, and gentlemen who constitute his advisers, you ask whence come my people?

“For ages, as countless as the sands of the Big River, the fresh waters of the great inland seas skirt-ing the first lofty range of the Rocky Mountains washed in torrents and torrents the salt deposited by the great upheavals of the western continent, through the yawning cañons which were created by these torrents’ own irresistible force, to the bases of the great barrier where the sun disappears. The fresh waters’ encroaching left their alluvial deposits further and further toward the setting sun in the same manner as the white settlers dispossessed the noble red warrior and primeval possessor of the Western hemisphere. The fresh waters divided and subdivided into smaller and smaller compasses. In these grand forest-grown, grass-covered areas herds of wild horses, buffalo, deer,

elk and mountain sheep found subsistence. The fertile valleys and meadows were thronged with villages of beaver, otter and mink, whose dams were overgrown with the silvery-leafed aspen upon which these busy families existed. The forests were fragrant with fir, cedar and pine, among whose branches the birds of the wood built their nests.

“But before these were other possessors of this great mass of tangled volcanic eruptions, at a time so remote that the mind becomes a mist, a fog bank in its endeavor to locate the date, and then only as an age, it being impossible to determine the century. The fossils of these prehistoric creatures have been found in deposits over three thousand feet in thickness, species until recently unknown to science. Here man inhabited dwellings of unhewn stone cemented with mortar containing volcanic ashes, at a period so long ago that the waters were supposed to wash the face of the cliffs upon whose precipitous side these ancient people lived, in evidence of which are the fossilized human bones.

“In this legacy is found the answer, ‘Whence come my people?’ And what nation has ever disputed the title of land conveyed by the Indians? As early as 1851, when Colorado was organized as a territory, a treaty was made at Fort Laramie with several tribes of Indians, by which the latter gave up all the lands east of

the Rocky Mountains. West of the continental divide were the great warlike tribes of Utes extending to the Sierra Nevadas, 15,000 free-born American savages to whose necks the galling yoke of civilization was to be adjusted.

"The Arapahoes, Cheyennes, Comanches and Kiowas, plains Indians, were mild and tractable in comparison with the Utes. These latter were fearless, indomitable warriors, who owned the forest, the river beds and mountain crags by inheritance from Almighty God, and whose disestablishment is written in letters of blood where the forest man was the aggressor by retaliation. But the outrages of the new people, the educated, civilized white man, must be forever unrecorded. Repudiation, shameless duplicity, political and martial perfidy, local and national, followed each other year after year until 1865, when the final treaties effected the abandonment of Colorado by the plains Indians, who were removed to the Indian Territory, where the government agreed to pay each Indian \$40 annually for forty years.

"My people, the White River Utes, had taken no part in the plains Indian controversies with the white people, and, while the Utes' territory bordered that of the Arapahoes and Cheyennes, the only courtesies were the exchanging of scalps and horses whenever they met. The time arrived when agents were ap-

pointed by the government to reside with each Indian tribe. These agents were generally respected and settled many jealousies which sprang up between the various bands of the tribe.

“Nevava, the great Ute chief of the White River tribes, had passed into the Happy Hunting Grounds and his sons each claimed the inheritance of ruler. There were many in the tribes who would gladly have accepted the distinction, but Ouray was appointed chief over all, the lesser chiefs being forced to content themselves with such following as their individual qualities could command. This caused great jealousy and in 1875 many conspired against Ouray. The neglect of the government to pay the annuities was charged against the big head chief, who was said to be in collusion with certain white men in depriving the Utes of their goods, and the question was oftentimes asked, ‘How comes Ouray to be so rich?’

“In 1879, the venerable N. C. Meeker was appointed to take charge, as agent, of my people at White River. He undertook the task of educating the Ute warriors to plow. Opposition met him at the start, for the soil is no more Ute soil when once broken by the white man’s plow.

“Aid from the war department was expected to force the warriors to till the soil.

“Runners carried the news to the agency that a

band of Utes who had set out to hunt had ambushed the cavalry. The final outcome of this outbreak cost us our home in Colorado, for soon after the relief of the cavalry the White River agency was abandoned and my people removed to the Uintah Reservation in Utah. It is too late now to undo the wrong which resulted in the removal of the Utes from Colorado, but, gentlemen, the land given over and set apart by your own government in the Indian Territory for those tribes now occupying the domain should be held sacred. I appeal to you to keep this land intact and forbid its being thrown into the hands of speculating spoilers. The Indian is not able to cope with the cunning of the white brother, and he is unable to endure the conditions by which his white brother naturally adapts himself to the cultivation of the soil, the marketing of produce and protection of estate."

The appeal was in vain. The political influence of cattle barons proved too great, and the concourse of settlers swallowed the territory in question. The result was very disheartening to Chiquita, but she bore up and turned her attention to other duties, preparing for the final establishment of her home for the aged and infirm Indians. This home she decided to model after a plan of her own, unlike anything in any city, possibly in the world. Persistent effort among the political leaders of both great parties resulted in Con-

gress setting apart, in western Colorado, a large tract equal to one hundred miles square, to include a portion of the land on the north side of the Grand River, where it cut the Park or Gore range, taking in the old Ute trail, the camp in the willows, the junction of Rock and Toponas Creeks and the high divide along the edge of Egeria Park, where Jack froze his feet.

The tract of land became by law the National Hunting Ground of the Blanket Indian, provision being made for the maintaining of the park, policing, stocking with game and fish, as the same might be killed or disappear. No white man was to be allowed to hunt or fish under any circumstances within the domain, no squaw with white man husband and no descendants of any but full-blooded Indians were to be allowed to take up residence within its established lines. No cultivation of the soil for domestic purposes, no harvesting of any crop whatsoever, no institutions of learning, no mercantile establishments, no Indian agency to obtain footing, no railroad, no stage line for tourists, no telegraph or telephone poles and no vehicles of any kind were to be tolerated. Tourists afoot or on horseback accompanied by an Indian guide, a resident of the park, could travel and camp, the guide allowed to kill game or catch fish for his party as food supply, but no game or fish to be taken from the park. The one exception to all this was the immense hospital and

necessary minor buildings, an ambulance, vehicles and paraphernalia for conveying disabled persons, supplies for the hospital, and nurses to and from the nearest railway. All food products, supplies and clothing were to be obtained outside of the park lines and all annuities due the Indians were to be paid them at agencies established without the park.

When the bill making these provisions came before the upper house for a final vote, a tall, white-haired senator responded to his name and arose. Pointing with outstretched hand to the gallery, where a group of aged, wrinkled chiefs congregated about a fair Indian girl, he said, in part :

“Tardy as this action of the great American people may seem, I think I echo the sentiments of both friends and foes of this persecuted race when I raise my voice in their behalf. The foes of the Indian are but the natural result of broken faith, and while it may be good logic to say one white man is worth more than all the Indians ever created, it does not condone the trespass committed when the white man became the usurper and confiscator of the very thing given voluntarily by his fathers and forefathers. Follow the patient man of the forest as the dogs of civilization barked at his heels, worrying him the same as the doe becomes affrighted when she hears the deep bay of the hound upon her track. Look at the primitive

means of defense with which the noble red man attempted to defend his domain against the onward march of civilization. The pages of the record of this chamber, of the war department, of the department of the interior are dripping with the blood of this race, defrauded of their homes, their hunting grounds, aye, gentlemen, even their burrying grounds. 'Move on! Move on!' has been the command since 1620, until this handful of a great and brave nation are today but remnants of cowardly and degraded tribes, made so by the damnable treachery of American white people and their civilized methods of aggression. I consider it one of the greatest honors of my life to be able to face that faithful, devoted Indian girl, Chiquita, and cast my vote 'aye' in this weak and tardy attempt at remuneration."

Two tiny red spots burned in Chiquita's cheeks as the senator finished. She smiled at the applause which greeted the venerable member and prepared to listen to the rest of the voting. When the last name was called, before the teller could announce the result, a cheer from the galleries burst forth, every eye was directed toward Chiquita, and in response to the wave of applause she arose and bowed her appreciation of the action of that august body.

But the excitement proved too great a strain upon her temperament, and she was carried to the hotel

in a fainting condition. As she recovered consciousness, she said to Hazel, "Chiquita will be one of the first to leave the National Hunting Ground for the great Happy Hunting Ground above." She realized that her vitality was weakened, that overwork and exposure had made her vulnerable to insidious disease, whose progress would be rapid now that the weakened spots had succumbed to its ravages. But she would not give up the cherished hopes of seeing her one aim in life accomplished, the forest-grown reservation where her people could forever hunt and fish without further molestation or dividing up of the land, and in its center wigwams, lodges, tepees and her great hospital for the sick, helpless and aged when they would be unable to take care of themselves.

Immediate preparations were made to carry out her cherished wish, which had been so many years her aim. With Jack to aid her the purchases of material were made. Contracts were entered into for the erection of the buildings and equipment therefor. Nurses and attendants were engaged for the hospitals, and for a year she watched the accumulating results which her education and fortune were bringing about.

But the task of civilization was one which nature condemned in such a short period. The overwork and confinement was more than she could endure and she



THE TEEPEE ON THE GRAND RIVER.

sought rest from the weary toil inflicted upon herself in behalf of her people.

In a grove of tall fir trees, close to the placid waters of the Grand River, Yamanatz erected his tepee, where in the soft, balmy air, fragrant with balsam and cedar, Chiquita could rest and watch the clouds as they made great shadow pictures on the mountain and stream. Like a sentinel, a lone peak stood beyond the cleft in the great divide, whose precipitous sides rose in towering splendor all clad in verdure green. The river reflected on its mirror of millions of tiny drops of sparkling water, the blue sky, the trees tinted red by the setting sun, the tepee on the bank of the stream and the mountain tipped with its cap of eternal snow. The camp fire sent a spiral of thin blue smoke toward the azure dome, and by the lurid coals two Utes smoked in silence. Within the sign-bedecked tepee, upon a couch of lion skins, lay Chiquita, clad in hunting garb, her rifle and fishing rod beside her. Yamanatz, Antelope, Jack, and the mother of Chiquita stood by, while the fairest of the White River maidens told them of the great happiness which awaited her in the Happy Hunting Ground of the Utes which lay just beyond the sky.

"If my father and my mother were only there," said Chiquita, as she pointed beyond the cleft above the river. "And, Jack," she continued, "you must beg

leave of absence from the heaven of the white man and visit Chiquita in her happy home. You will find birds that sing and the bounding deer and flowers that bloom. The warriors of many, many snows are gathered there and you will see the Utes in all their grandeur, as they were before the white man took their land."

"But what of your friends, Chiquita, those who taught you of the religion of our people, of the only Christ who died to save mankind?" asked Jack, as he recalled the years and years of Chiquita's life in school, in college, in the hospital, the church and in the society of the ablest women of the nineteenth century.

"Ah, Jack!" Chiquita waited a moment, then with her bright eyes reflecting the love of the forest queen for her native haunts, customs and the freedom of the woods, she continued, "The God who gave you the Christ gave you also wisdom, and with that wisdom cruel weapons to drive the weaker to destruction. The paleface has driven the red man to his death. My people share not the needs nor desires which civilization brings to the white brethren, nor the society demands which make our paleface sister a slave to her calling. Jack, I have lived among my white sisters, I have been one of them, been sought for, banqueted, heralded and had tributes of honor thrust upon me,

No school, no church, no institution of science, no club, no society, no matter how select, has been other than glad to have Chiquita honor them with her presence. With wealth untold and accomplishments unattained before by any woman in the world, Chiquita returns to her forest home for peace and contentment. 'In my Father's house are many mansions.' Yes, Jack, and the tepees of the great Indian nation stretch beyond the sky to welcome Chiquita. See, Jack, father, mother, the braves in all their glorious array are waiting for Chiquita! 'Our Father,' the Great Spirit of both the red and white man, welcomes. It is in the peace of the Happy Hunting Ground that we find rest. Adios, Jack. The great Yamanatz will soon follow and it will not be long ere all my people are as the buffalo, and the white man alone in the land that once was a paradise, but the mockery of civilization turned it into a stench hole of iniquity and market place of educated vampires, against which the child of the forest of the same God had no"— The voice failed to respond to the effort. Chiquita was dead. And with her was buried that undying, unquenchable, unsung love which consumed her heart.

A camp bird, in subdued autumn plumage of black and pearl gray, mewed plaintively as the old warrior came forth from the tepee. The wrinkled visaged chief beat his breast and muttered in Ute dia-

lect the prayers of a bereaved father for a dead daughter. The old "medicine" chief ceased to bang the tom-tom and the jargon of the squaws was silenced. Jack looked on with keen disappointment. For years he had watched and sympathized with Chiquita in her ambition; and now at the last turn in the great course of life, after tasting nearly every phase of civilized honor, she had returned to the religion of her fathers and died with utter contempt in her heart for the foibles and allurements of civilization, civilized society and civilized government.

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Chiquita

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